

1. Agenda 6/26/2017

Documents:

[AGENDA JUNE 26 2017.PDF](#)

2. Council Order Creating The Task Force

Documents:

[173-A.PDF](#)

3. Historical Information Submitted By Herb Adams

Documents:

[MLK H_ADAMS_ARTICLES.PDF](#)
[STREETS_HISTORICAL_FIGURES.PDF](#)



City of Portland
Martin Luther King Recognition Task Force

June 26, 2017

4:00 PM

Room 24

AGENDA

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Review scope of the Task Force as defined in Order 173
3. Discuss whether the Bayside Trail remains a good candidate location to recognize Dr. King
4. Review the list of streets submitted by Herb Adams
5. Adjourn

Order 173-A-16/17

Motion to suspend the rules and take up a non-agenda item: 9-0 on 3/27/2017

Passage: 9-0 on March 27, 2017

Effective 4/6/2017

ETHAN K. STRIMLING (MAYOR)
BELINDA S. RAY (1)
SPENCER R. THIBODEAU (2)
BRIAN E. BATSON (3)
JUSTIN COSTA (4)

CITY OF PORTLAND
IN THE CITY COUNCIL

DAVID H. BRENERMAN (5)
JILL C. DUSON (A/L)
PIOUS ALI (A/L)
NICHOLAS M. MAVODONES, JR (A/L)

AMENDMENT TO ORDER 173-16/17
RE: NUMBER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING TASK FORCE MEMBERS TO 9 AND
ADDITION TO CHARGE OF THE TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, the life of Dr. Martin Luther King shines like a beacon of justice through the years that have followed his death, showing the world a way forward in the midst of racial strife; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Portland wishes to find a way to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King in the City of Portland, perhaps by renaming a street, a park or public place in his honor;

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED, that the Dr. Martin Luther King Recognition Task Force is hereby established to consider how the life and legacy of the Civil Rights Leader Dr. Martin Luther King may be best acknowledged and recognized, in the form of renaming a street, park or similarly situated public space, by the City of Portland; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that nine members including one City Councilor as chair shall be appointed to the Dr. Martin Luther King Recognition Task Force by the Mayor which as per the City Charter may be overridden by six votes of the City Council; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the Dr. Martin Luther King Recognition Task Force shall report back to City Council's Sustainability and Transportation Committee within 60 days of being appointed or at the latest by June 1, 2017 with a recommendation, which must be approved by said Sustainability and Transportation Committee and presented to the City Council by August 31, 2017; however, the Task Force may request extension by the City Council of both dates, which request, if reasonable, shall not be denied; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the Dr. Martin Luther King Recognition Task Force will terminate on December 31, 2017 unless its term is extended by order of the City Council, however the Task Force may request extension by the City Council of the termination date, which request, if reasonable, shall not be denied.

RE: Dr. Martin Luther King, jr., in Maine

TO: MLK, jr., Recognition Task Force ----- 9 June 2017

FR: Hon. Herb Adams -- Maine Sunday Telegram articles of
January 17, 1988

On his one known visit to Maine, May 7-8, 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., did not speak in Portland. Dr. King spoke in Brunswick at the First Parish Church, and in Biddeford in the Field House of St. Francis' College, today the University of New England campus.

Some years ago I had the honor to interview many of those who heard Dr. King in both places. Many of those people, sadly, are gone now. But here are the articles I wrote about their memories about those speeches, still vivid and strong after twenty-five years had passed.

CIVIL RIGHTS

King's voice still rings in

Impact of words spoken here in 1964 is felt years later

By Herbert Adams

A few weeks after sitting in a southern jail, and a few months before winning the Nobel Peace

Prize, King brought his message of human rights directly to the people of Maine.

Twenty-five years have not dimmed the memory of the man or his message, says Bill Whiteside, who heard King speak before a hushed, jam-packed hall in Brunswick one spring night in 1964.

"You could have heard the proverbial pin drop," he recalls. "It was both moving and amazing, not an event you could attend and not remember for the rest of your life."

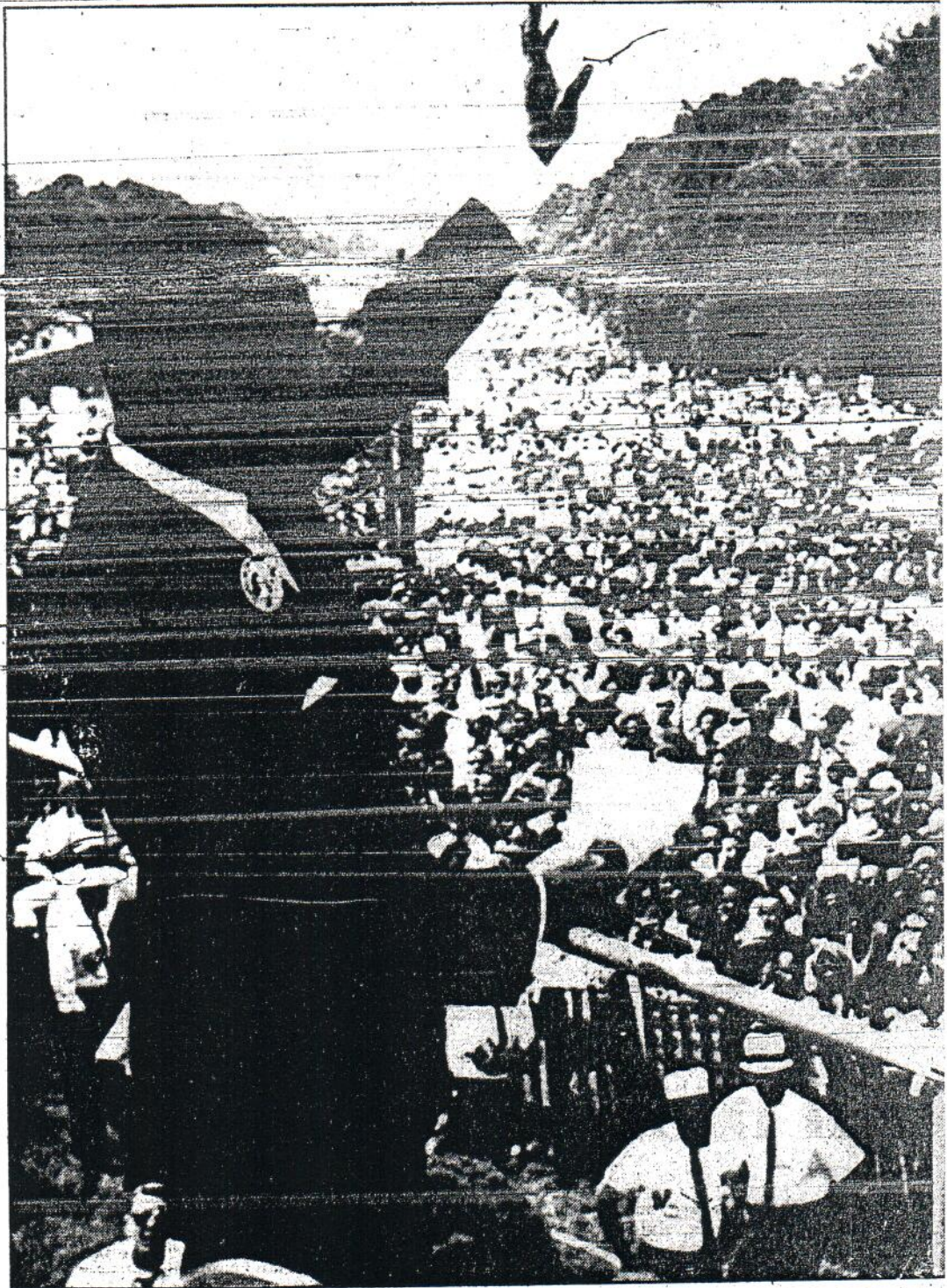
King's Maine visit of May 7 and 8, 1964, marked a time memorable for all Americans — for all the wrong reasons. To a nation still stunned by the assassination of President Kennedy, the night's news added Police Chief Bull Connor of Birmingham turning dogs and firehoses on peaceful civil rights marchers. It seemed, said Time magazine, "that the nation is suddenly falling apart."

Against this backdrop, King's message to Maine seemed amazingly simple: Peace, he declared in Biddeford and Brunswick, and nonviolence.

"This is the most potent weapon available to oppressed peoples. Nonviolence disarms your opponent, for he doesn't know how to struggle against it," he told Biddeford audiences.

To many Mainers, such struggles seemed far away. For exactly that reason, Biddeford's St. Francis College (now the University of New England) brought a galaxy of the foremost activists of the 1960s Down East, said one account, "to bring our Maine community more acute awareness of the civil rights problem, since our consciousness is rather dulled by our distance from the bloodshed and violence."

Dorothy Day, Roy Wilkins and Bayard Rustin joined Biddeford's symposium on civil rights, titled "The Negro and the American Quest for Identity." But the drawing card was clearly Martin Luther



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Associated F
King waves to the crowd during the March on Washington on Aug. 28, 1963

King's voice still rings in Maine 33

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King, and the overall event bore the name of King's most famous speech, then only a few months old: "I Have a Dream."

Students of Bowdoin's Political Forum brought Rustin and King on to Brunswick's historic First Parish Church on May 7. During the Civil War the old church had been a stop on the Underground Railroad, funneling slaves to freedom in Canada. When the Rev. Calvin Stowe was its pastor, his wife, Harriet Beecher Stowe, had worshipped there while writing "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

"It was also the largest public place in town," recalls Bill Whiteside, then and now a Bowdoin history professor. "And it was packed to absolute capacity and more. Bowdoin was making a big thrust then to recruit black and minority admissions, and the student body was very activist — not like the Bowdoin campus today." During his visit to the campus, King also visited an exhibition at the college art gallery on "The Negro in American Art." Printed news accounts of his

speech at First Parish Church are few, but the impression made by the man remains vivid.

Even without a public address system, King himself filled the room, Whiteside recalls. "I can't even remember who introduced him. King's resonant voice, every whisper, filled the hall. He knew how to handle an audience — in a church particularly."

"It is a fact we have come a long way, but we still have a long, long way to go," King declared, reported the Portland Press Herald.

"Segregation must be solved because it is morally wrong, and an evil... If this Civil Rights bill does not pass (Congress) the sore may turn malignant, and become as inescapable as cancer. I would rather see no Civil Rights bill at all than one emasculated by amendments. The greatest tribute this country can pay to John F. Kennedy is to see that this bill passes not watered down."

Every level of America had a role to play: "Even Sunday schools are still the most segregated schools in the country. Government, labor, industry, have roles to play in the struggle, and a struggle it is, but nonviolent — the most

potent weapon available to oppressed people."

Extremists of either side had no place in it, King warned, neither "that merchant of hate from Alabama" (Gov. George C. Wallace) nor "Black supremacists" (Malcolm X), for "the doctrine of black supremacy is as dangerous as white supremacy."

King addressed many comments directly to black exchange students from Atlanta's Morehouse College, his own alma mater, who filled the two front rows. King concluded with his own words spoken at the Lincoln Memorial, already an anthem for his struggle: "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, I'm free at last!" — and the applause "was thunderous, just a torrent," says Whiteside.

At a reception afterward, Daniel Levine, then Bowdoin's first professor of black history, recalls King struck a solemn note.

"He acknowledged his efforts had had limitations," says Levine. "He hadn't been able to talk successfully to northern blacks, the urban poor and young, who turned to drugs. He said, 'I disagree with Malcolm X completely, but Malcolm has been able to reach them, at least.' He hoped to reach them in

time. But he never had that time, of course."

Four weeks after leaving Maine, King went willingly to jail in St. Augustine, Fla., protesting a segregated motel. Five months later, he stood in Oslo, Norway, the youngest man ever to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

Four years after the spring King brought his message to Maine, he went to Memphis, Tenn., and the Lorraine Motel. The rest is history.

"Maine was fortunate he came to share with us. I believe he was the greatest individual, black or white, since the Civil War, who rose to represent the ideals of human rights and civil rights," says Whiteside.

"I wonder what reception we'd give him today. The country has periods of ups and downs in social activism. The '60s were up; we're down. But we'll recapture that spirit again. At least I hope we will. And I'll never forget the night the man who symbolized it best was here."

Herbert Adams is a historian who writes regularly for the Telegram. He served as secretary of the Greater Portland Martin Luther King Day Committee.

Minister's path joined with King's

Boys prayed together, men marched together

PERHAPS we first saw each other as boys in the pews of his daddy's church," says the Rev. John Wells of Portland. "But the first time I recollect shaking hands with Martin Luther King was in the middle of 16th Street in Washington, D.C., marching to the Lincoln Memorial in 1963."

Wells speaks with a Southern accent as warm as the sun on the fields of his native Georgia. In his youth, he was among the handful of whites who attended services at black churches in Atlanta.

"My mother was active in Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta, and I went with her. Atlanta's black churches were not segregated, and whites were welcomed with dignity — but no black ever went to a white church. Some lessons you learned young."

The pastor of Ebenezer Baptist was the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr., known to all as "Daddy King." He was "a big, powerful, loving man," Wells recalls, "a great believer in education, and his son benefited from that, but his son was a doer."

Now pastor of Portland's historic First Parish Church, Wells is a southerner turned northerner, a lawyer turned minister, who has seen the sword of justice cut from both sides.

As a lawyer in the U.S. Air Force's Judge Advocate Corps, he drafted the order that Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara signed into law, desegregating housing on all U.S. military bases. In 1961 he left the law to enter Howard University's Theological School, as the only white in his entire graduating class. "I returned to the real world and real work," he says.

In 1963, as pastor of Washington's Mt. Vernon Church, Wells organized the Unitarian delegation in the famous March on Washington. "We felt real fear; we didn't know who might come in to break it up. We several hundred set off down 16th Street — and Dr. King came back along the line and marched with us a while. It sur-



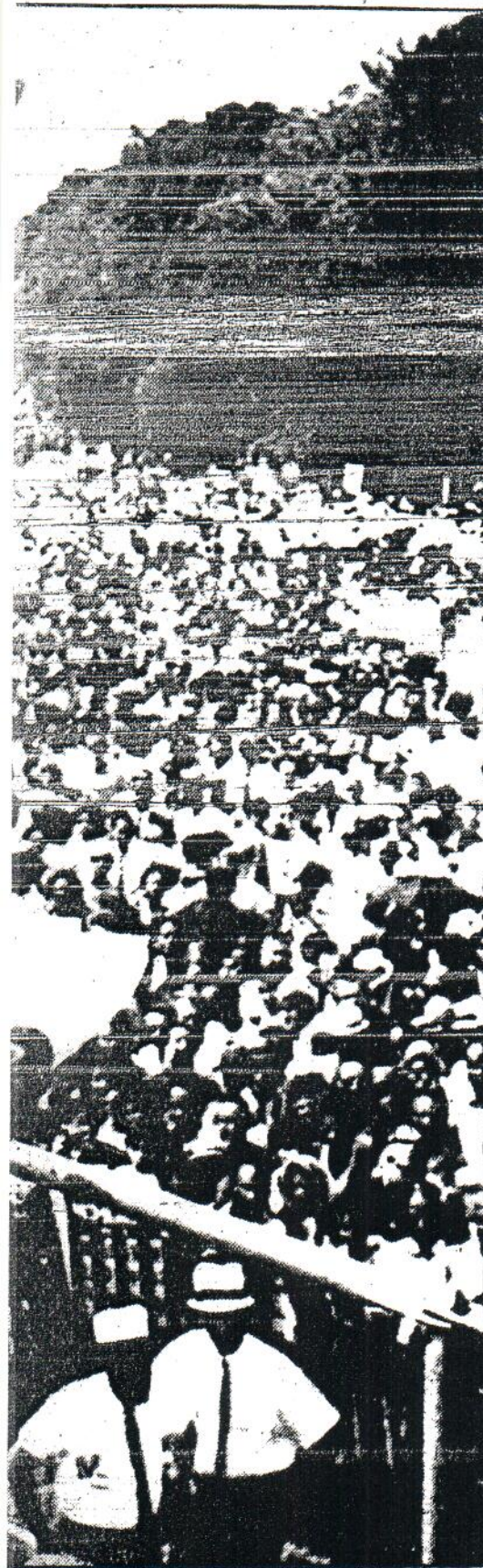
The Rev. John Wells of Portland's First Parish Church marched with King.

prised us all. And our picture, side by side, was on the front of the Washington Post the next day," he smiles.

King's "I Have a Dream" speech that day was both a masterpiece and a milestone, Wells believes.

"It was electrifying, it caught you both in mind and spirit and you were completely lost in it, in the sun, the crowd and the sound."

"But more important, it said there was hope for blacks and whites, that the walls of segregation would come tumbling down. This was a force that could not be dismissed — no way, ever, from that speech on."



Associated Press

March on Washington on Aug. 28, 1963.

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Remembering King

Today

Bangor Theological Seminary, Bangor: Service of remembrance at Beech Chapel from 4 to 4:30 p.m., followed by talk by Gerald Talbot of Portland, former president of the Portland Chapter, NAACP, in Wellman Commons. At 5:30 p.m., also in the Commons, a pot luck supper will be held, followed by a sing-along until 8 p.m.

The Movies on Exchange Street, Portland: From 3 to 5 p.m.: Civil rights journalist Luiz Overbea of the Christian Science Monitor, discussing King and his times from his perspective as the first black staff reporter at the Winston-Salem (N.C.) Journal. Preceded by two short films: "Great Americans, Martin Luther King," and "Happy Birthday, Dr. King." Admission free.

Monday

The Sonesta Hotel, Portland: 8:30 a.m. breakfast in honor of King. Tickets available individually or by table. For information, call 772-7767.

Woodfords Corner Congregational Church, Portland: Noon: the Rev. Eli Smith of Green Memorial AME Zion Church will lead an ecumenical worship service. **Monument Square, Portland:** 7 p.m.: Rally followed by candlelight procession to First

King's life and works.

Colby College, Waterville: Karen

Russell, an attorney and the daughter of basketball star and coach Bill Russell, will talk about racism and privilege following a service in Lorimar Chapel at 7:30 p.m.

The University of New England, Biddeford: Two colleagues of King will speak: Dorothy Cotton, former director of Citizenship Education Programs for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, will conduct a workshop on the role of music in the civil rights movement from 10:30 to noon in Room 202 of Decary Hall. William G. Anderson, founder and first president of the Albany Movement and a director of the SCLC, will deliver this year's Martin Luther King Address, "The Dream Lives On," from noon to 1:30 p.m., also in room 202 of Decary Hall.

Friday, Jan. 29

Bowdoin College, Brunswick: "Living the Dream: Let Freedom Ring," program, coordinated by the college's Afro-American Society. Photographic retrospective in the Afro-American Center Library. Service at 10 a.m. in the campus chapel, followed by an informal luncheon in Wentworth Hall at noon. At 12:55 balloons will be released on the Quad, and at 2 p.m. a debate will speak at Wentworth Hall. At 2 p.m. panel discussion on civil rights and racism in contemporary life, also in Wentworth Hall.

King's vo

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Printed news accounts of his

Crossed paths

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Wells last sat beside King in the pulpit of Brown's Chapel, in Selma, Ala., for the 1965 march to Montgomery — a gauntlet of ugly threats, snarling dogs, and a bullet that took the life of a friend Wells had urged to stay for the march. The memory still causes pain, Wells admits. "Maybe all memories do, the important ones."

In 1968 the news of King's death brought Wells back to black friends at Howard University. "I was actually afraid that night. Black rage just blew up in the streets, and buildings were burning nearby on 7th Street. I was a lone white man, and I was really afraid."

Wells, now 60, is one year older than King would be today. He is not

one to live in memories. "Those days aren't sad to think of. There's always work to be done. Yes, you get discouraged, and say 'I quit' — but you don't."

"Today, my work is more in the field of peace. The greatest thing Dr. King ever did was to declare his opposition to the war in Vietnam in 1967. We have to make the world come to grips with nonviolent ways of thinking. It matters not whether there is desegregation or integration if there is no world."

With his finger in a book, Wells traces out a few lines of King's famous phrases about freedom's ring, and savors them, one pulpit veteran saluting another. "It's right Old Testament oratory," he smiles. "From the book of Amos: 'Let Justice roll down!' And it will. If we work, it will."

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TO: MLK, jr., Recognition Task Force ----- 9 June 2017

RE: Portland Streets Named for Prominent People

FR: Hon. Herb Adams (who encourages additions and corrections)

The practice of naming significant locations in our community in honor of prominent people is not a new one.

Following the Revolution and Maine Statehood (1820) several Portland streets and locations were named in honor of founders , patriots and significant others in the development of the nation, state, and city. The honor commenced immediately after Falmouth town (now Portland) began rebuilding after the Revolution, and old names from the past like King Street (now India) and Queen Street (now Congress) were rejected in favor of new names fitting to the new nation.

The following list illustrates this practice. It is not comprehensive. (Note : the * following a name indicates that person actually visited Portland. Persons with no such symbol never visited Portland .)

Washington

Adams *

Jefferson (discontinued street off Brackett)

Madison

Monroe *

LaFayette *

Franklin

Hancock *

Revere * (street in Deering, a city absorbed by Portland in 1899)

Neal * (for John Neal, prominent abolitionist and civic activist)

Dow * (for Neal Dow, prominent founder of Prohibition, and former Mayor)

Streets Named for Persons of Color

(Currently there are very few in Portland)

Ponce Street * (for Ernesto Ponce, a popular and prominent 19th-Century Hispanic tobacconist and entrepreneur. Ponce's Landing on Peaks is named for him.)

Douglass Street * (possibly for Frederick Douglass, prominent 19th Century orator and abolitionist, a frequent speaker in Portland. More research must be done to confirm this)

Prominent Squares

Andrews Square * (for Harold Taylor Andrews (1893-1917) , the first Portlander and first Mainer to die in World War I)

Longfellow Square * (for Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) , Portland native and prominent 19th Century poet)

Notably Missing

There are no prominent streets or squares named for members of the Jewish faith (the Jacob Cousins * Memorial stone on the Eastern Prom commemorates the first Jewish Mainer to die in World War I) ; prominent Irish (the John Ford * monument stands in Gorham's Corner, named for an English grocer) ; Armenians (many emigrated to Portland following the 1915 Genocide) ; Italians (the Peverada Boy's Club building on Cumberland Ave and the Evie Cianchette building in the Old Port are Portland's first structures named for those of Italian background) or working-class women , such as the Star Match Company Girls * or the Eastland Laundry Lady Workers. *

Note : One exception for the Irish is O'Brion * Street on Munjoy Hill, named for a popular 20th-Century city councilor .