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Cambridge, Boston, and beyond



I6J Classic, Funny, Macabre
Explorer J.W. Ocker's quest for what remains



I6B Extracurriculars
Events on and off campus in September and October



I6E "Visual Science: The Art of Research"
At Harvard's Science Center



I6N A Day in Purgatory—and Beyond
Nature, art, and food in and around Worcester



I6P The Air of Contentment
The Fairbanks House reflects Puritan-era life in Dedham.



I6R Wenham Museum
A new exhibit explores equestrian life and sport on Boston's North Shore.



I6U All About the Food
Boston Public Market's year-round cornucopia



Extracurriculars

Events on and off campus during September and October

FILM

Harvard Film Archive

harvardfilmarchive.org

"The B Film" series screens *The Octopus!*, *Kid Glove Killer*, and *Weird Women*, among

other genre films from the mid 1930s to the 1948 Paramount Decree, underscoring the argument that they should be "recognized as a unique and quintessentially American art form." (September 13-November 25)

From left: *Child 1980*, a dye-diffusion print, among works by photographer Olivia Parker at the Peabody Essex Museum; the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, in Sanders Theatre; from *Fruits in Decay*, at the Harvard Museum of Natural History

Democratic Republic of Congo documentary **Dieudo Hamadi**, director of *Kinshasa Makambo*, the extraordinary 2018 account of three young political activists, is this year's McMillan-Stewart Fellow in Distinguished Filmmaking, and will be on hand to share and discuss his work. (October 4-9)

GlobeDocs Film Festival

filmfest.bostonglobe.com

This annual event, sponsored by *The Boston Globe*, features timely films, community gatherings, and conversations with journal-

FROM LEFT: OLIVIA PARKER; COURTESY OF THE PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM; HARVARD-RADCLIFFE ORCHESTRA; HARVARD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



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HARVARD SQUARED

Kim. Peruse everything from wearable art and housewares to photographs, sculptures, and fine jewelry—with plenty of holiday-gift options. (October 12)

Peabody Essex Museum
pem.org
Order of the Imagination: The Photographs of Olivia Parker reveals the artist’s masterly ability to spur dialogues among “nature and abstraction, permanence and ephemerality.” (Through November 11)

THEATER
American Repertory Theater
americanrepertorytheater.org
In **Black Light**, performance artist Daniel Alexander Jones sings, struts, and tells it like it is as his glamorous alter-ego Jomama Jones. Oberon. (September 19-29)

Billed as a galvanizing musical testament to “girl power,” **Six** spotlights the historic stories of King Henry VIII’s doomed wives. Loeb Drama Center. (Through September 27)

Central Square Theater
centralsquaretheater.org
The Crucible. A well-timed production of Arthur Miller’s American classic about corrosive power. (September 12-October 13)

Huntington Theater
huntingtontheater.org
Tom Stoppard’s Tony Award-winning tragicomedy **Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead** envisions the trajectories of two minor characters from *Hamlet*. (September 20-October 20)

Boston Lyric Opera
americanrepertorytheater.org
The season’s debut, **Pagliacci**, stars tenor Rafael Rojas and soprano Lauren Michelle. (September 27-October 6)

Events listings are also available at www.harvardmagazine.edu.

Spotlight

Works by Colby Charpentier and Natalia Arbelaez, Harvard Ceramics Program artists in residence, stretch the expressive language of clay—in the disparate directions of mind and body.

In “Devitrified,” which refers to the growth of crystalline structures, Charpentier’s technically precise, clean forms explore material questions: “What if we took clay out of the vessel and glaze was all that remained?” and “What does it mean to replicate a 3-D printing process by hand?” (September 3-27)

The Miami-born, Colombian-raised Arbelaez, however, creates earthy figures, like *Montañas de Fuego* (above). They evoke collective human memory and cultural identity, namely of Latin American and Amerindian people. As Arbelaez explains, these objects “contribute to a contemporary dialogue while simultaneously continuing the work of my ancestors.” (October 5-November 1)
Harvard Ceramics Program
224 Western Avenue, Allston (Boston)



NATALIA ARBELAEZ



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Classic, Funny, Macabre

Explorer J.W. Ocker's quest for what remains

by NELL PORTER BROWN



Clockwise, from top: buildings at the historic Medfield State Hospital complex; USS Albacore, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire; spray-painted skull mural on climbable rockface near the Lynn Woods Reservation; Ocker, out and about at the ruins of Bancroft Castle, in Groton, Massachusetts; and the "Rocking Horse Graveyard," in Lincoln, Massachusetts—"It's a fun, whimsical thing with a flea-market feel," Ocker says. "But at night it's one of the creepiest sights on the planet."

unique, abandoned world that anybody can access."

Opened in 1896 as the Medfield Insane Asylum, the Massachusetts institution featured an innovative "cottage-style" design: smaller buildings, a chapel, and a central common—all meant to provide restorative fresh air, sunlight, walking paths, and occupations, such as



NEW ENGLAND IS FILLED with peculiar places, and J.W. Ocker plans to find them all. The New Hampshire-based explorer—and creator of the *OTIS: Odd Things I've Seen* travel blog, podcast, and related books—gravitates to anything offbeat, haunting, or macabre. "It's just my aesthetic," he says on a crisp morning stroll among the 40 shuttered red-brick buildings of historic Medfield State Hospital—once a pioneering institution that housed chronically ill patients for more than a century.

OTIS began in 2007 as a hobby that got Ocker away from the TV and out of the house, and now features his funny, slightly snarky accounts of many of the more than 1,000 such sites and objects he has visited—across the country and abroad, including hundreds in New England. Old mills, factories, and esoteric inventions fit his catch-all "odd" criterion, as do cemeteries, ruins, historic literary haunts, movie-set locales, kitschy attractions, and purported centers of paranormal events.

Mostly because he's an introvert, Ocker seeks eccentric physical sites and objects—

not live people, unless they *collect* oddities—that concretize the complexities, absurd and sorrowful alike, of human nature and history. That explains his fascination with the Medfield site. "Thousands of people walked and worked around here, were in these wards—some for their entire lives," he says. "It's not a story in a book. It's this

HARVARD SQUARED



Nature reclaiming the stones of Madame Sherri's Castle, in New Hampshire

laboring on its affiliated farm, in a village-like setting. Unlike similar institutions that were closed, razed, or turned into condominiums, the Medfield property was bought by the town in 2014 and opened as a public park. Plans are in the works to re-develop the complex, which includes buildings on the National Registry of Historic Places, while preserving some open space as well as aspects of its critical role in the history of mental-health care in the United States.

Ocker also recommends stopping at the hospital's cemetery down the road. More than 800 patients were buried there under small plaques bearing only numbers, until the grounds were refurbished, starting in 2005. Then names replaced the numbers on new headstones, and a sign was installed: "Remember us for we too have lived, loved and laughed." Cemeteries not only reflect local history, they are often "beautiful, quiet places, with funerary art, animals, plants, and trees," Ocker notes. "Every family trip, I try to squeeze one in."

Strange monuments are another unofficial *OTIS* subgenre. Take the two statues of Hannah Duston, an English colonist from Haverhill, Massachusetts, who was captured in 1697 by Native Americans toward the end



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The Hannah Duston statue in Haverhill memorializes the axe-wielding English colonist.

of King William's War. She finally managed to escape by killing and scalping nine of her captors, and her story was recorded by the prominent Puritan minister Cotton Mather, A.B. 1678. "Was she a hero, or not?" Ocker asks. "This is about the history of survival. But it's also the story of a woman killing people. And these are believed to be the first official statues of a woman in the United States." The bronze figure in her hometown

NORTH WIND PICTURE ARCHIVE/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

wields an axe, and in the granite monument on a Merrimack River island north of Concord, New Hampshire, she holds scalps—for which she was paid.

Not everything on OTIS is as grim. Ocker raves about the whimsical "Rocking Horse Graveyard" (a.k.a. Ponyhenge), in Lincoln, Massachusetts. Nobody's sure what engendered the herd of more than 30 plastic and wooden horses in a field on Old Sudbury Road, but around 2010 one appeared, and, over time, "as a sort of community in-joke or light-hearted art display, people have added to it," he says. "Sometimes I'll go and someone's rearranged it all—into lines facing each other, like in battle, or in a circle, or paired off."

Similarly, he appreciates the creative drive behind the Andres Institute of Art, a 140-acre sculpture park in Brookline, New Hampshire. Scattered along trails on Big Bear Mountain, contemporary works offer an active day out, tinged with culture.

The Phoenix (1999), made by Latvian artist Janis Karlovs from granite found on the property of the Andres Institute of Art, stands 15 feet high and weighs 11 tons.

As Ocker puts it: "Just the fact that there's something around the next bend beyond poison ivy makes it a much more pleasurable experience than your average hiking trail." It's open daily, year-round, from dawn to dusk—and it's free. Ocker's picks tend to cost nothing more than gas money.

THE IDEA for OTIS arose when Ocker, out of college and an aspiring writer living in his native Maryland, just wasn't that happy. "I didn't really like my life. I didn't really like me," he says. To help break a sense of inertia, he began driving to unusual places. Digital cameras were becoming popular, so he took pictures and posted them online with humorous, informative texts. It pro-



RANDY DUCHAINEL/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

vided a focus, even meaning, and became "a life-changing time of discovering the world outside myself."

Kindred curated urban explorer or "off-the-beaten-path" sites like *Atlas Obscura*, *RoadsideAmerica*, and *Roadtrippers* are slicker; they have cinematic visuals and battalions of scouts and writers across the globe. OTIS is personal and homegrown—one man's nearly obsessive project.

By 2008, Ocker had moved to New England, where he was thrilled to find that "Everything is old!" Now living in Nashua, New Hampshire, with his wife, Lindsey, a professional photographer, and three young daughters, he adds, "Just going to the grocery store, I pass three historic cemeteries. My friends who grew up here don't even know any of this stuff—but it's all so ripe for exploring."

He has a full-time day job, as an executive at a digital creative agency in Boston, but OTIS has also morphed into far more than a pastime. He still travels for it, often taking along willing family members, like five-year-old Hazel. In addition to *The New England Grimpendum: A Guide to Ghostly and Macabre Sites*, and a sister volume focused on New York State (both won top awards from the Society of American Travel Writers Foundation), his book on Edgar Allan Poe-related sites earned an Edgar Award from Mystery Writers of America. *A Season with the Witch* chronicles the month-long Halloween extravaganza in Salem, Massachusetts, and due out for the holiday this year is his adult horror novel, *Twelve Nights at Rotter House*. It's about a travel writer drawn to the paranormal who plans to produce a bestseller based on his time in a haunted mansion. Sound familiar? Ocker laughs. "Yeah, I originally conceived of it as a nonfiction account of staying in a haunted house for a few weeks, and then I realized that would be boring, so I turned it into fiction."

His worldview easily flexes both ways. Researching his sixth book, now titled *Cursed Objects*, has brought him closer than usual to notions of psychic phenomena and the spirit realm. He's intrigued by the staying power of claims like "Ötzi's curse," the idea that people linked to the "iceman" found preserved in the Alps "come to a bad end," he intones melodramatically. "You can try and go see him. Or maybe not. Maybe play this one safe."

Does he believe in ghosts? He laughs. "I don't, unfortunately. I like the paranormal, the stories, and the people who chase phenomena. But I just don't believe in it—

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ALL IN A DAY: Purgatory—and Beyond

Shimmying through “Fat Man’s Misery,” a cleft in towering granite bedrock, is among the pure, kid-like joys of scrambling in **Purgatory Chasm State Reservation**. The entire site is a geological funhouse—of uncertain origins. “It’s a fault,” posits Nichols College geology professor and glaciologist Mauri S. Pelto, who has studied the area south of Worcester and updated previous theories, “and the fault was exploited by a glacier that plucked out the rocks” that now litter the adjacent Purgatory Brook Valley. It was also likely a sacred place for the regional Nipmuc peoples—and given its pejorative name, conventional wisdom holds, by colonists intent on Christianizing them.

Whatever the history, the very essence of the 70-foot gorge and its cavernous, perhaps ominous, terrain still captures the imagination. Check out the precipitous outcroppings—“Lovers’ Leap” and “Devil’s Pulpit”—or take the half-mile loop that winds through the boulder-strewn bottom and then circles back on a rough path along the cliffs. For those less eager to test their agility by clambering, the 1,800-acre park—celebrating its centennial this year—has tamer trails following brooks or through the woods, along with a playground, grilling zones, and a visitors’ center.

After everyone’s exercised, drive through pastoral scenery, stopping for snacks or lunch at the **Sutton Center Store**, en route to exploring art, culture, and food in **Worcester**.

The **Worcester Art Museum’s** exhibit “**Knights!?**” offers medieval arms and combat—with live demonstrations—using objects from the Higgins Armory Collection (through November 6). “**With Child: Otto Dix/Carmen Winant,**” opening September 21, looks at women’s social, political, and medical conditions, notably during the Weimar Republic, and includes “The Trouble with Pregnancy: A Forum on Art and Reproduction,”

on October 18, as well as a community arts showcase on the subject.

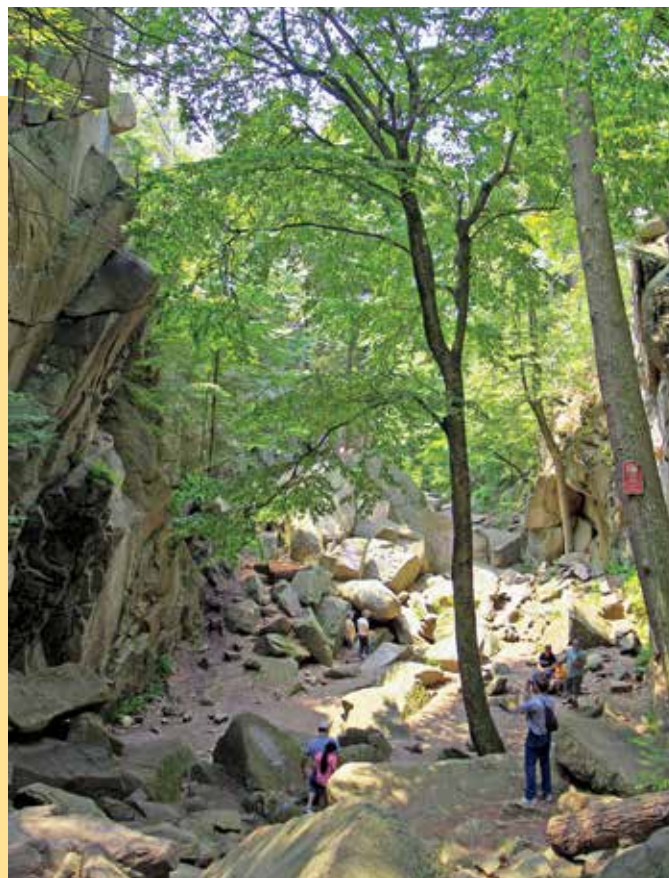
Check out the city’s emerging artsy **Canal District**, with its giant murals, Saturday farmers’ market, shops, bars, and restau-

rants. A self-guided walking tour explains the 1820s Blackstone Canal, which linked to Providence’s seaport, and the ensuing industrial boom. **Lock 50** serves super-fresh salads, burgers, and crêpes, or go to **El Patrón Mexican Restaurant** for enchiladas and tortas. **Binh An Market** offers Asian teas and take-out fare, such as Vietnamese spring rolls and honey-soaked pastries; walk a few blocks and eat them in the courtyard of a converted factory that now holds the **Crompton Collective**—stalls of vintage clothing, antiques, and local artwork. Upstairs, don’t miss the “lifestyle and plant boutique” **Seed to Stem**, packed with ingenious botanical creations and home goods.

Get back into nature at the nearby **Ecotarium**, a kid-oriented science center. It has hands-on experiment stations, a planetarium, walking trails, and a new **Wild Cat Station** featuring sibling mountain lion kittens found orphaned in California.

Worcester’s food evolution makes dinner easy. For inventive grilled fish, meat, and vegetarian dishes, go to **deadhorse hill**, or dig into the artisanal pies at **Volturino Pizza Napoletana**. **Sole Proprietor** is a traditional favorite for seafood cooked every which way, while the newer **Fatima’s** offers Africa-centric cuisine, like Ethiopian *injera* (spongy flatbread) and Kenyan *ugali* (cornmeal porridge). Eat before or after a show at the historic **Hanover Theatre**, where groundbreaking comic actress **Carol Burnett** appears for *An Evening of Laughter and Reflection* on October 17.

A day in purgatory, it turns out, is not that bad. ~N.P.B.



NORMAL BARRITT/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Clockwise, from top: adventures in Purgatory Chasm; picturing reproduction, at the Worcester Art Museum; wild cats at the Ecotarium; and outdoor markets in the resurgent Canal District



TRACY LEVIN



COURTESY OF THE ECOTARIUM



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and this is coming from a guy who's spent the night in an abandoned prison in West Virginia, at Lizzie Borden's House in Fall River, Massachusetts, and in all kinds of graveyards—all the places that ghosts are supposed to be, and there's not even a single experience that's even twistable into a real paranormal phenomenon."

What he likes about the "Dana Ghost Town," among the communities disincorporated to construct the Quabbin Reservoir in central Massachusetts, is walking through the forest and finding a stone marker: "SITE OF DANA COMMON 1801-1938 To all those who sacrificed their homes and way of life." Only cellar foundations remain, he explains,

The "Clinton Train Tunnel," built in 1903 near the Wachusett Reservoir, goes "from nowhere to nowhere."

but many are posted with placards and images of the buildings that comprised a thriving community—the church, school, and blacksmith. "So it's another family-friendly place, where you can wander around and understand what was there," he says. "Some of the cellar holes even have doors you can walk through."



LINDSEY OCKER

He typically doesn't get scared, at least not anymore. Perhaps as a secondary gain from founding OTIS, Ocker has inured himself to common human fears, such as mortality—or small, tight spaces. A big guy, he confesses to having claustrophobia, yet he boarded the pioneering research vessel USS *Albatross*, now installed on land and open for tours in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Used from 1953 to 1972, the submarine's design helped revolutionize the capabilities of underwater military maneuvers. "It's much smaller than those giant nuclear subs," he reports, "and it's terrifying. You see where they slept, on shelves on top of each other, and even just walking around is hard." One section holds a few multipurpose, foldout tables with checkerboards; "You squeeze yourself out from some tiny slot, and you get to go play checkers. That's what keeps you from going bonkers," Ockers says. "It takes a certain special mindset to do that job."

Over the years, he has become increasingly cautious, traveling to isolated or potentially dangerous places only in the daytime—and he does not condone trespassing or other illegal urban-exploring activities; even so, he has been escorted from a few sites. It's legal to scramble around Skull Cliff, the ghoulish 2001 mural painted on a 30-foot rockface on a ridge in Saugus, Massachusetts. "To get to it you have to go through car dealerships on Route 1," Ocker says, "but at the top you can look out over an old quarry and see the Boston skyline."

He plays with "pushing beyond the fear" factor at many site visits, and knows that getting active outside on weekends and learning something new about the world benefit himself and his children. Not long ago the family explored the "Clinton Train

STAFF PICK: The Air of Contentment

When Jonathan and Grace Fairbanks were invited to live in Contentment, a Puritan community formed in 1636 (now Dedham, Massachusetts), it was likely because of his crucial skill: spinning-wheel maker. Every family needed at least one wheel, to spin flax and raw wool into thread for weaving cloth, says Leslie Griesmer, business manager at the Fairbanks House historic site—"the oldest wood-frame structure still standing in North America." It is open for guided tours through October, and hosts an annual fall festival, this year on September 29.

Walking around the dark, low-ceilinged dwelling that includes a warren of rooms added over time, it's easy to imagine hunkering down there on what was then a frontier. The homestead ultimately accommodated eight generations of Fairbankses, who changed very little before turning it into a museum in 1904. To site curator Dan Neff, therefore, it "feels a lot more like a home than many house museums."

Photographs, furnishings, farm tools, and dishware reflect the lives of previous occupants, giving the interior a ghostly air. A beautiful gateleg, flame-maple table built in the 1650s remains, Neff says: "It's a giant piece of wood—there aren't



trees here big enough to make this table anymore." There's also a pack saddle and a yoke for oxen that are likely from the 1600s, he says, along with a sundial and eight spinning wheels. Whether any were made by a Fairbanks is unclear, but contemporary craftspeople demonstrating spinning, and other traditional skills, will be at the fall festival, along with historic re-enactors portraying soldiers, farmers, doctors, and others who were essential to keeping colonial communities alive.

—N.P.B.



Tunnel," built in the early 1900s near the Wachusett Reservoir in Massachusetts. At two-tenths of a mile, it "literally goes from nowhere to nowhere," he says, but as you walk through it, graffiti-covered concrete walls eerily shift to raw rock, dripping with slimy earthy wetness. And it's dark. A flashlight was required in the disorienting space as he and his little daughter moved toward a porthole of light at the far end. She somehow lost the head of her doll along the way, and Ocker had to go back to find it.

More hauntingly beautiful is Madame Sherri's Castle, within a forest that bears her name in Chesterfield, New Hampshire. A visit to the once majestic stone chateau, built by a theatrical New York City costume designer, can easily be combined with Mount Monadnock-region hiking, because it only takes a few minutes to take in all that remains of her home, destroyed by fire in 1963: a foundation, a few pillars, and a crumbling, winding staircase. "I tell everyone to go now," Ocker says, "because places like this don't stick around forever."

OTIS rarely veers into such sentimentality. Ultimately, "if it's truly 'odd,' there's

The Quabbin Reservoir's "Dana Ghost Town" is an archaeological landscape; at a Catholic retreat center on Enders Island, in Mystic, Connecticut, the chapel holds a relic: the severed right arm of Saint Edmund, a learned archbishop of Canterbury who died in 1240.

something macabre about it," Ocker clarifies, toward the end of the visit to Medfield State Hospital. "For instance, there's this island off Connecticut that has the severed arm of Saint Edmund in a glass case. And it's a sacred religious object, which I respect and is interesting, but, at the end of it all, it's macabre. It's a body part."

"Dad?" Hazel, who's been gamely trotting along, collecting pinecones, interrupts the adults to ask for a ride on Ocker's shoulders.

"Maybe later," he says gently, and then adds, "Look around, see this? This is an abandoned hospital." He gestures toward the boarded-up chapel, the wards, and the swathes of open lawns.



JAMES M. HUNT/ALAMY STOCK PHOTOS



COURTESY OF J.W. OCKER

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For the Love of Horses

Contemporary echoes of nineteenth-century sport

by NELL PORTER BROWN



EQUESTRIAN LIFE and sports have long shaped Boston's North Shore. In the late nineteenth century, that primarily agricultural region, with industrial hot spots along the coast and Merrimack River, evolved into "the premiere summer colony of affluent Bostonians, many of whom were avid equestrians," according to a new exhibit at the Wenham Museum: "They rode, hunted, drove carriages, played polo, golf and tennis, swam, and sailed their yachts and steam launches."

Within a 25-mile radius of the museum, says its director of external affairs, Peter G. Gwinn, sporting grounds and facilities for fox hunting, polo, dressage, and three-day eventing emerged over time, drawing riders and fans from across the world. The exhibit strives to "bring riders and non-riders together to learn about, and share, the importance of these sports and traditions," he adds. "We also hope to highlight the land, and the importance—to everyone—of open landscapes and conservation, which all began here because of the love of horses."

A continual driver of these traditions is the Myopia Hunt Club, in abutting South Hamilton, with its foxhunts, polo grounds, and golf course (designed in 1894 by Herbert Corey Leeds, A.B. 1877). It was established by a group largely composed of Harvard graduates, and, apart from two wartime breaks, polo players have competed on Myopia's Gibney Field on summer Sundays since 1887.

Those matches, held this year from June 2 to September 29, are still open to

the public. The \$15 tickets are sold on site the day of a game; tailgating parties before and during the match are allowed. In addition, the Harvard Polo Club and its men's and women's teams—which feature in the museum exhibit, along with current head coach Crocker Snow Jr. '61, a Myopia

A child's carriage (ca. 1907), tack-room gear like bridles, blankets, and saddles—along with competition and polo-playing dress—and a collection of toys help celebrate equestrian activities.



Vintage photographs of riders in motion and displays of full regalia depict the disciplined nature of equestrian sports.

The museum highlights the 1910 union of another Ayer family member, Beatrice Banning Ayer, and a

young U.S. Army lieutenant named George S. Patton Jr.—the future four-star general. In 1928, they moved into a South Hamilton homestead, with 27 acres of fertile fields and horse trails along the Ipswich River, that became their family base—and then that of their son,

George Smith Patton IV, a highly decorated U.S. Army major general in his own right. (His widow, Joanne Holbrook Patton, donated the property and family archives to the town of Hamilton and the nonprofit Wenham Museum, respectively; both are

member and former championship-team polo player—are based at the Harvard Polo and Equestrian Center. It's a short woodland ride from Myopia's grounds, where the club's fall-season opening match will be held on September 22.

Besides polo, the sprawling museum show covers dressage (performance of a precise series of movements), foxhunting, and the resurgent Gilded Age coaching revival (with harnessing and driving tournaments), along with displays of saddles, bridles, and garb, horse-themed vintage games and toys, and a play paddock for children. Gwinn notes as well that the North Shore played a significant role in American

eventing, also known as horse trials. Generally comprising dressage, show-jumping, and cross-country, eventing is rooted in historic military competitions during which officers showcased their cavalry horses' "obedience, maneuverability, and endurance." In 1973, Myopia club polo player and huntsman Neil R. Ayer Sr., M.B.A. '54, established a world-renowned eventing course on his family's Ledyard Farm, in Wenham—vestiges of which remain. It was the site of numerous Olympic pre-trials; England's Princess Anne and her then-husband, Captain Mark Phillips, competed there in 1975.



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now open to the public for guided tours, by appointment only.) The famous World War II commander “was raised on a California ranch,” Gwinn says, “and was one hell of a rider and polo player.” In a quote from the exhibit, Patton clearly savored the “virtue of polo as a military accomplishment....It makes a man think fast while he is excited; it reduces his natural respect for his own safety—that is, makes him bold.” His wife, Beatrice, who grew up in Boston’s Ayer Mansion, was also an expert competitive rider, as were other family members, and is

featured in the exhibit’s montage of Patton family home movies narrated by their son.

HARVARD CONNECTIONS to the region’s equestrian community run deep, as the exhibit reveals. Myopia’s predecessor, Myopia 9, was a baseball club formed and named, half-jokingly, by a group that included four near-sighted sons of Boston mayor and steeplechase racer Frederick O. Prince, A.B. 1836. They all played baseball at Harvard, and built the original club house in 1879 in Winchester. Many in the group, however,

soon became infatuated with fox hunting. By 1883, the club was officially re-christened Myopia Hunt Club and relocated to South Hamilton, where members brought a pack of hounds over from England and purchased the Gibney Farm (its main building still serves as the clubhouse) with Harvard polo player Randolph M. Appleton, A.B. 1884, serving as Master of the Hounds from 1883 to 1900. Since 1952 the club’s hunts, which currently run through numerous open-land trails, from Essex and Ipswich to Newburyport, have been “drag hunts”: they follow a pre-laid scent instead of live prey.

Polo, perhaps the world’s oldest team sport, took root in America in the 1870s, and spread to Danvers, Wenham, and Hamilton, the exhibit notes, where spectators arrived “by train, carriage and coach” to enjoy “half-time teas and divot-stamping—but it was the breathtaking speed and the ever-present possibility of risk that gave polo its loyal local following.”

Harvard played an integral role here, too. It formed the first United States intercollegiate polo team in 1883, and in 1890 moved its ponies and operations to land offered by Myopia; the two clubs were among the five charter members of the U.S. Polo Association in 1891. After a decades-long up-and-down history during the second half of the past century, Harvard polo revived in 2006 (see “Polo Renaissance,” November-December 2007, page 85) largely through “horses, a stable, and financial support,” the exhibit notes, from famous actor Tommy Lee Jones ’69, a veteran polo player himself. Its Hamilton equestrian center, a refurbished historic horse farm, opened in 2014.

Although American polo and other equestrian sports are typically expensive, rarefied pursuits, these traditions have influenced the regional character of the North Shore, affecting its residents, economy, and topography. In developing this new exhibit, the Wenham Museum—best known as a family-friendly place with an extensive model-train gallery and collections of antique dolls and toys—is building on its mission to “share local histories that continue to have a connection to and important impact on current and future generations,” Gwinn says. “Equestrian Histories” offers a fun look back at the origins of horse in sport in New England—and beyond—and vivifies, for all ages, the universal values of sport activity, animal appreciation, and ongoing preservation of today’s North Shore landscapes.”

—NELL PORTER BROWN



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All About the Food

Boston Public Market's year-round cornucopia
by NELL PORTER BROWN



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: THE MARKET AS A COMMUNITY GATHERING POINT; FLOWERS FROM FIELD & VASE/STOW GREENHOUSES; FRESH PRODUCE AT THE SIENA FARMS SHOP; RED'S BEST REGIONAL SEAFOOD; LAW OF PASTA OWNER AVERY PERRY

AT LUNCHTIME, Law of Pasta owner Avery Perry darts around his Boston Public Market shop, stopping just long enough to explain himself: “They call me the ‘bad boy of pasta,’” he says, gesturing to cases of freshly extruded noodles, “because I do semolina and whole-wheat—but then I go crazy—throwing in garlic, roasted beets, spicy cocoa, cranberry, blueberry. My limit is my imagination!”

Perry, who’s been cooking since he was a child and now teaches pasta-making at the market’s KITCHEN (see below), is just the kind of spirited culinary entrepreneur whom the nonprofit, year-round venture promotes. “Our mandate is to support New England farmers and food producers,” says marketing coordinator Tim Johnson, “so we are always going to have a balance of vendors.”

The Public Market’s 34 shops fill the first floor of a building at the busy nexus above the MBTA’s Haymarket station, amid City Hall, the North End, and the Freedom Trail. Adjacent outdoor tables and chairs on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway offer space to eat and relax—or you can carry food to the

seating or steps of City Hall Plaza, a terrific spot to watch thronging humans.

More than a decade in the making, the marketplace finally opened in 2015. Focused on seasonal goods, it offers everything from prepared and take-out meals to meats, dairy products, fish, and produce, to flowers, herbs, nuts, and chocolate, to hand-crafted wooden bowls, stone platters, lotions, and woolens.

The family-owned Chestnut Farms, in Hardwick, Massachusetts, began with the 2004 reinvigoration of a former dairy farm, and now operates a community-supported-agriculture (CSA) program as well as the marketplace shop. It sells grass-fed, pasture-raised beef, pork, lamb, goat, and poultry, and underscores the environmental reasons to buy local with a posted chalkboard diagram that asks: “How Far Does Your Meat Travel?”

Clockwise from top left: the market as a community gathering point; flowers from Field & Vase/Stow Greenhouses; fresh produce at the Siena Farms shop; Red’s Best regional seafood; Law of Pasta owner Avery Perry

Across the way, Red’s Best sells regionally sourced fish and shellfish, including lobsters and other raw-bar-quality seafood. Founded in 2008 by Jared Auerbach, the company works with a network of about 1,000 fishermen, processing their daily catches and locating buyers—eliminating expenses re-

lated to the traditional wholesale-auction system. Red's also tracks the fish loads, so the origins and processing are traceable, which helps monitor environmental sustainability. Red's marketplace menu extends to classic New England crab cakes, lobster rolls, salmon burgers, and fried calamari laced with cherry peppers. For dessert, head to the counter of Crescent Ridge, a family-owned creamery in Sharon, Massachusetts, for ice cream made with milk from the St. Albans Cooperative Creamery in Vermont.

"We get a lunch crowd and a tourist crowd," Tim Johnson says, along with hordes of downtown-area workers who stop by on their way home, via the subway at Haymarket, and pick up groceries or dinner.

Inna's Kitchen features take-home fresh or frozen entrées, like chicken and vegetable pot pies and sweet-and-sour brisket, along with other "Jewish cuisine from around the world," like knishes, latkes, and the inevitable chicken noodle soup. Don't miss the trade-marked "Shakalatkes"—potato pancakes topped with shakshuka (poached eggs in a sauce of tomatoes, garlic, paprika, and chili peppers) and sprinkled with

feta cheese. Next door, as the weather cools, try the nutritious rice, ramen, or noodle bowls loaded with toppings—enoki mushrooms, silky tofu, pork loin, bok choy, or soft-boiled eggs—at Noodle Lab. For bagel sandwiches smeared with deluxe salmon and bluefish paté, check out Boston Smoked Fish Co., or try the smoked-salmon and -haddock soft tacos slathered with a cumin-lime-spiced purple-cabbage slaw and cilantro crema.

The marketplace also attracts sports fans on their way to the nearby TD Garden, Johnson says, "but our sustaining crowds are area residents who are doing their grocery shopping here and at our outdoor farmers' markets. We're in what's called the 'emerging market district,' one of the fastest-growing areas in Boston."

Currently, the three farmers' markets are held at City Hall Plaza and in Dewey Square



Shakalatkes, at Inna's Kitchen

(both open through November 19), and at the Seaport (through October 30), but the organization is eager to expand its outdoor locations. Later this year, it will open a second indoor hub at Logan Airport's Terminal C. Five vendors offering prepared and take-out food will form a "food court-style experience," Johnson explains.

There will also be a market bar with local beverages.

Alcohol is also sold at the Haymarket location's Massachusetts Wine Shop, operated by the Massachusetts Farm Wineries & Growers Association. Some 90 varieties of reds, whites, and sparkling wines, along with mead and hard ciders, are stocked, and rotating daily tastings feature products from Westport Rivers, Plymouth Bay Winery, and 1634 Meadery, among others.

Other local products at the marketplace, along with produce, are sold by Siena Farms,

owned by Chris Kurth and his wife, chef Anna Sortun, in Sudbury, Massachusetts. Artisanal items include Mi Tierra's corn tortillas, Buenas's chimichurri and spicy Chilean *pebre* sauces, and ginger and turmeric-honey syrups from Old Friends Farm. Or try fermented products made in Maine: miso by Go-en Fermented Foods, and the hot kimchi and gingered carrots from Thirty Acre Farm.

For bouquets of fresh-cut blooms and foliage (which can also be custom-made and sent to loved ones), stop by the floral design studio and shop Field & Vase, run by Stow Greenhouses. More than 90 varieties of flowers and plants are grown, without pesticides, on the 14-acre Stow, Massachusetts, property, including inside a one-acre-sized greenhouse heated with bio-mass (wood-chip) boilers.

A few blossoms would sit nicely in a hand-crafted "boulder"—bowls crafted from boulders—produced by another marketplace vendor, American Stonecraft Inc., based in Lowell, Massachusetts. The company depends on about a hundred farmers throughout New England to salvage stones from the land that might otherwise be discarded as junk. "We're up-recycling those stones and making them into objects to use in the home," says the helpful saleswoman. Company owner Gerald Croteau began "foraging" for heirloom-quality stones, and then founded American Stonecraft in 2012. "We do all the cutting, shaping, and polishing—everything—in our studio, and I emphasize *studio* because we want these to be used, but they are also artistic products," she adds. Croteau carefully assesses organic vein-patterns, shapes, colors, and heft in selecting the raw materials for triv-



American Stonecraft transforms foraged stones into unique bowls and platters.

ets, cooking slabs, and platters that stand the test of time.

For those eager to learn more about such regional natural resources and sustainable horticultural practices—or just get news about the local New England food community—Boston Public Market is a hub of information. It hosts speakers and workshops, along with special events like summer's Fermentation Festival and winter's Fiber Farm Festival. "Beyond just being a food market, a place for people to be nourished," Johnson explains, "we are also a guide to the local agricultural system."

One founding member of the marketplace, the nonprofit Trustees, oversees The KITCHEN, a "community gathering place" featuring regional chefs and other culinary innovators. In addition to periodic workshops taught by Law of Pasta's Avery Perry, experts from the Everett-based Short Path Distillery will teach a craft-cocktail mixology class on September 27—and on September 30, chef Peter Ungár, of the haute-styled Tasting Counter, in Somerville, offers a three-course vegetarian cooking class. There's a session on baking hardy, healthy breads on October 6, and a chance to learn creative meatless-cooking techniques with *Epic Vegan* author Dustin Harder on October 19.

The marketplace invites anyone to join its volunteer ranks, and/or attend its October 24 Harvest Party fundraiser. Proceeds support community engagement efforts. "We are a place where people come to learn new skills—about the science of food and agriculture," Johnson notes, and to get any help they might need "to make sure they are making intentional choices about their food."

—NELL PORTER BROWN



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For years, the South End's SoWa Open Market has given up-and-coming artisans, from painters to soap-makers to jewelers, a platform to showcase their work. This year, SoWa enhances the experience with a pop-up beer garden, inviting the region's best brewers to pour drinks normally reserved for their own taprooms. Browse SoWa's wares every Sunday from 10 A.M. until 4 P.M. through October and relax over drinks courtesy of Banded Brewing, Finback Brewery, SingleCut Beersmiths, and Schilling Beer Company. Pair your beer with treats from some of Boston's favorite food trucks, including

Blackbird Doughnuts and Bon Me. See the lineup at www.sowaboston.com.

Meanwhile, Thursdays are the marquee day at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Enjoy their Third Thursday programming on the third Thursday of September and October, with activities facilitated by local artists and thinkers, ranging from live music in the museum's courtyard to talks with city horticulturalists about how to preserve urban green spaces. Learn about their programming at www.gardnermuseum.org.

And on Friday, October 25, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, hosts the latest installment of its ongoing Late Nite series in partnership with local artists. Expect DJs, dancing, and interactive experiences until 2 A.M., along with small plates and cocktails, all while exploring the galleries after hours. Browse the lineup at www.mfa.org.

Across town at the Seaport, the Institute of Contemporary Art is known for its First Friday events, 21-plus theme parties that kick off each month with specialty cocktails, DJs, and dancing. This fall, the ICA will also host several dance performances featuring talents discovered during ICA curators' scouting trips. From September 19 until 21, enjoy choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's "Fase," set to music by renowned minimalist composer Steve Reich. On October 18 and 19, watch Zimbabwean choreographer Nora Chipaumire perform pop, punk, and Congolese rumba, highlighting the music of icons such as Grace Jones and Patti Smith. Get tickets (\$35; \$25 for members) at www.icaboston.org.

Finally, the Harvard Art Museums present a new documentary film, *Voices of the Rainforest*, on Monday, October 21. Directed and produced by acclaimed ethnomusicologist Steven Feld, *Voices of the Rainforest* is an experiential documentary about the ecological and aesthetic coevolution of Papua New Guinea's Bosavi rainforest region and its inhabitants. Through sound and image, the film immerses viewers in the rainforest and makes audible



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALI CAMPBELL

connections between the sounds of the rainforest biosphere and the creative practices of singing about it by the Bosavi people. Feld discusses the film with Amahl Bishara, associate professor of anthropology at Tufts University, after the screening. Admission is free; doors open at 5:30 P.M. Learn more at www.harvardartmuseums.org.

~ KARA BASKIN