

# New England

MAINE

## Beyond the lobster

BY HILARY NANGLE | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Looking for a new experience in Maine? Here are six, ranging from world-class art to world-inspired music, new visitor centers to new sporting events.

**Colby College Museum of Art expanding to house world-class donation**

With the mid-July opening of the 26,000-square-foot Alford-Lunder Family Pavilion, the Colby College Museum of Art will put Waterville on the map as a destination for art lovers. The expansion makes the museum Maine's largest in terms of gallery space.

The new \$15 million glass pavilion was designed specifically to showcase the Lunder Collection, one of the most important holdings of American art assembled by private collectors. The recent gift to the college from Peter H. and Paula Crane Lunder comprises more than 600

The region's biggest state is adding to its A-list of destinations more art, music, explorations — on a cross-border marathon or Acadian bike trip — and seaside lures

significant pieces and is valued at more than \$100 million. Nearly 500 works, dating from 1796, are by American masters, including John Singer Sargent, Mary Cassatt, George Inness, William Merritt Chase, Winslow Homer, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Edward Hopper, Alexander Calder, Georgia O'Keeffe, Alex Katz, Louise Nevelson, Romare Bearden, Donald Judd, John Chamberlain, George Rickey, and Jenny Holzer. A wall drawing by Sol LeWitt commands a three-story, glass-enclosed stairwell.

Also in the collection is a concentration of works by James McNeill Whistler, including nearly two dozen paintings, watercolors and pastels; 201 etchings and lithographs; and 150 books, journals, photographs, and archival materials. Of note, too, are 40 exceptional examples of Chinese ritual and mortuary ceramics dating

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Owls Head Light Station's keeper's house is now open; Buddy MacDonald will play the first Crossroads International Celtic Festival; a loop of the new Bike Maine Ride in Acadia.



BOB TRAPANI JR. (LEFT); BIKE MAINE (RIGHT)



PHOTOS BY BRIAN IRWIN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

## ON A TREASURED ISLAND: QUIET, CAMPSITES, SEASIDE SECRETS

**By Brian Irwin**  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT  
HERMIT ISLAND — In 1907 Sumner Sewall, 10, and his friends rowed across an inlet to a barren island just south of Phippsburg. Dunes dotted the shoreline as they made their way to a man's cabin. Purportedly he was an odd old man. He kept a few sheep. He had no family. He kept to himself, a hermit. The boys would

row over in the shallow light of evening, sneak up on his abode, and spy on him. Eventually the man died, his home disintegrated, and the island, coined Hermit Island by the young Sewall, developed into a rustic, no-amenities campground on the lapping shores of the Atlantic. But Hermit Island didn't start as a campground. Although the powdery sand, sea

grass, and lily pads floating in a frog-choked pond frame an idyllic camping backdrop, the island was first developed as a lobster impoundment. Sewall, who grew up to become an airline executive and served as governor from 1941-45, returned to his maritime roots. He partnered with his two sons to purchase the island in 1948 so they could build a small dam, trap lobsters, and sell

them in the spring when they'd grown plump. Over time taxes climbed, revenue dropped, and to make ends meet, they laid out 14 campsites along the ocean to supplement their income. Hermit Island Campground was born. Today there are 270 camping sites on an island where little else has changed. There's still no power or running water,

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The author's family explores a stretch of Sand Dune Beach on Hermit Island, where son Reid found a sand dollar worth its salt.



# Preserving an island a boy made into a camper’s treasure

►HERMIT  
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no RVs or boxy trailers. Such rigs aren’t allowed, only tents and pickup trucks.

“We kept it this way to preserve the land, to do as little damage as possible and try to maintain the natural beauty of what’s there,” says Nick Sewall, Sumner’s son and current owner. “We wanted to change as little as possible when we built the sites.”

Camping here is like stepping back in time. A tiny store sells ice and local lobster; you have to bring everything else with you. The campground is tightly organized, with sites in shallow depressions between dunes, organically-trimmed spaces within thick vegetation, or on the bluffs overlooking the ocean. They are surprisingly private and all have easy foot or bike access to hiking trails that ripple to the island’s uninhabited north end.

Pocket beaches dot the shoreline, some flanked by corrugated sheets of granite peppered with barnacles, seaweed, and urchins. Crabs scamper from flooded pothole to pothole at low tide, making this a child’s wonderland of tidal pools. Gentle waves and protected waters make this an ideal destination for sea kayaking.

The island has somewhat of a cult following. Testimonials are rare, since most guests are repeat visitors who want to protect their resource. Many fear that if this place becomes popular, it may turn into a developed



BRIAN IRWIN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Three young Irwins play at a Hermit Island spot that dates millennia, where beach still rules over boardwalk and the only development in a century has been the laying out of campsites with no water, no electricity, and closed to RVs and trailers.

resort. And although increased popularity could make the reservation system even more competitive, it’s the tax structure that has the island at risk.

“The biggest threat to Hermit Island are climbing taxes,” says Sewall. “Nearby property is selling for such exorbitant prices that their tax rates are influencing ours. It’s getting to the point where it may be too expensive to keep [the campground] running as is. It’s threatening our livelihood.”

Sewall anticipates that within a decade he may have to consider other options, including selling or developing part of the

land. Yet “changing anything at Hermit Island would be an absolute last resort,” he said.

Fresh off the beach my daughter Ella, 6, asked, “Can we go to SS1?” As it turns out, our four kids had identified a system of “Secret Spot” locations, nothing more than a sequentially numbered series of enclaves under various bushes, in the dunes, and in the brush. There were four, all within 20 yards of camp, each adorned with the typical accoutrements of a child’s fort, such as imaginary fairy houses and rock collections.

It takes a certain thirst for

simplicity to leave your bed, computer, and microwave, pack your car, and sleep on the ground in a tent for a weekend or a week. Some campgrounds offer activities to stave off boredom: arcades, hot tubs, mini-golf. On Hermit Island “SS2” is your arcade. Sun-baked tidal pools are your hot tub. You make your own mini-golf course in the hardened sand. It’s vacationing stripped down, nothing but you, your family, gawking shorebirds, and a feeling that visitors have been protecting for 65 years.

Last year my wife, Lori, and I were fast asleep before our

## Getting to 60 with best of the Modernists

►OGUNKUIT  
*Continued from Page M1*

came a retreat for artists, many of them from New York and beyond, who came here to relax and to paint,” says Ron Crusan, executive director and curator of the museum.

A returning core of artists, including Strater (1896-1987), the museum’s founder, were drawn to the sleepy fishing village, seeking refuge from the city heat, the fellowship of other artists, and the inspiration of the scenic oceanfront setting. The result: Ogunquit became a thriving artist colony and a focal point for American modernism.

Strater first came to Ogunquit in 1919 to study at Hamilton Easter Field’s Summer School of Graphic Arts, one of two art schools that had been established in Ogunquit at the time. He spent subsequent years in Paris as a successful painter, but returned to Ogunquit in 1925 to settle down. He continued to paint and collect art from fellow artists and friends that later formed the genesis of the museum’s permanent collection.

“He was a visionary,” Crusan says. “He was buying from artists like Marsden Hartley [the Modernist who became known for his paintings of coastal Maine and portraits of seamen] when other people weren’t even thinking of it.

“But Strater worked with some of these artists, too; he knew them personally,” Crusan says. “And, in some cases he was supporting them. He’d buy works from them so they could eat. Others would gift work to him because he had a personal relationship with them.”

In 1953, Strater designed the building overlooking the often-painted Perkins Cove to house the growing collection. Today the museum, devoted exclusively to showcasing American art, is about 7,500 square feet, with nearly 2,000 works of art in its permanent collection, including paintings, sculptures, photography, and graphics. It houses one of the largest collections of ceramic sculpture by Carl Walters, watercolors by Eliot O’Hara, oils by Strater, and drawings and sculpture by Isabella Howland. Other highlights include a complete set of all the graphic works of Jack Levine, eight Reginald Marsh tempera and watercolor depictions of the Bowery and Coney Island, and seven fine works by Hartley.

“It really is a deep collection,” says Crusan, who was director at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London,



COURTESY OGUNKUIT MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Marsden Hartley’s “Lobster Pots and Buoys” (1936) and Walt Kuhn’s 1927 portrait “Brenda” (his daughter) are part of the permanent collection of Modernist painters at the Ogunquit Museum of American Art, which celebrates its 60th anniversary starting in May.



Conn., before coming to Ogunquit four years ago. “I knew the collection was good, but I didn’t know it was this good.”

The collection includes a variety of works by artists associated with the famed Ogunquit arts colony, including Edward Betts, Charles Woodbury, Field, and Robert Laurent, and several other Maine artists. But, Crusan says, the museum is also remarkable for the wide diversity of artists represented, including George Bellows, Rockwell Kent, Walt Kuhn, Gaston Lachaise, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Childe Hassam, Edward Hopper, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, and others.

The best of the collection will be highlighted this year in the special “Sixty Works — 60 Years” anniversary exhibition, which runs May 8 through October.

“The exhibition will feature 60 of the most important works from the collection,” says Cru-

san. “It may end up to be more than 60 pieces. We have so many good ones, it’ll be hard to pick.”

The exhibition will include works from the early days of the collection through the most recently-acquired works, and spread throughout four of the museum’s recently spruced-up galleries.

The other anniversary year exhibition, “Andy Warhol: American Icon,” will run July 12-Sept. 1. It will feature the photographs of Pat Hackett, Warhol’s longtime friend and writing collaborator. Every morning beginning in 1976, Warhol would phone Hackett to relate the events of his past 24 hours — and what he thought about it all. Hackett would also frequently accompany Warhol, photographing his daily routines, along with his meetings with fellow artists and celebrities like Mick Jagger and Jacqueline Kennedy. The exhibi-

tion will feature 50 to 60 of Hackett’s photographs, never before shown in public, along with original works of art by Warhol.

“Charles & Marcia: The Woodburys in Holland” will run Sept. 5 through October. Charles Woodbury was an influential member of the Ogunquit art colony, and founder of the Ogunquit Summer School of Drawing and Painting. Woodbury and his wife, Marcia, also an artist, first visited Holland on their honeymoon and returned several times to paint the Dutch landscape. This exhibition will showcase their work during their travels.

“Emerging Artists: 2013,” will also run Sept. 5 through October. It features the work of three up-and-coming New England artists (they’ve not yet been selected), working in traditional to experimental media. “We’re trying to make the museum more open to contemporary art and living artists,” says Crusan.

We browsed the six galleries, freshly painted, with new floors and lighting, as workers prepared for the museum’s grand 60th-year opening. Outside, we meandered the pocket gardens, landscaped lawns, and rocky ledge that spread across three acres. The gardens’ strategically-placed sculptures were still wrapped in protective canvas, but spring flowers were beginning to pop. We sat on a bench overlooking the cove, and it was easy to imagine a budding artist, brush in hand, painting the inspired scene.

**The Ogunquit Museum of American Art** 543 Shore Road, 207-646-4909, [www.ogunquitmuseum.org](http://www.ogunquitmuseum.org). Daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m., May 8-Oct. 31. Admission \$10, seniors and students \$9.

Diane Bair and Pamela Wright can be reached at [bairwright@earthlink.net](mailto:bairwright@earthlink.net).

### If you go . . .

**Reservations:** Check out [www.hermitisland.com](http://www.hermitisland.com) for its complicated reservation system. Reservations are best made by mail and open for the summer on Jan. 1. From \$37 a night. **Don’t forget:** Insect repellent, all your food, and a canoe or kayak if you have one. Closest amenities are 30 minutes north in Bath, so bring everything you need for your stay.

Saturday morning departure for Hermit. At 4:30 our bedroom door swung open. Morgan, 5, stood on the threshold, fully dressed and beaming. She softly spoke. “OK guys. I’m ready to go to Hermit Island. I

just need to go to the bathroom before we get in the car.”

Later in the fading sunset our campfire crackled, warming our family’s favorite camping meal. As gravy popped on the campstove and I sipped wine from an aluminum mug, our children ran into the campsite, carrying buckets of sand dollars, razor clam shells, and driftwood. Ella clambered over the dune, asking, “Can we come here every year?” The squeals and giggles faded into the nearby vegetation as it became apparent to Lori and me: Hermit Island had become an annual tradition.

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