

QUEEN CITY REGISTER.

**Special Halloween
Issue!!**



**Spooky Happenings
This Month!!**



Reference 1

BRADY GANG EVENT!

JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL BRADY
GANG TOUR - OCTOBER 18
[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP!](#)



GHOSTLY BANGOR WALKING TOURS

A SPOOKY TOUR OF DOWNTOWN
[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP!](#)



DARKER SIDE OF MOUNT HOPE TOUR!

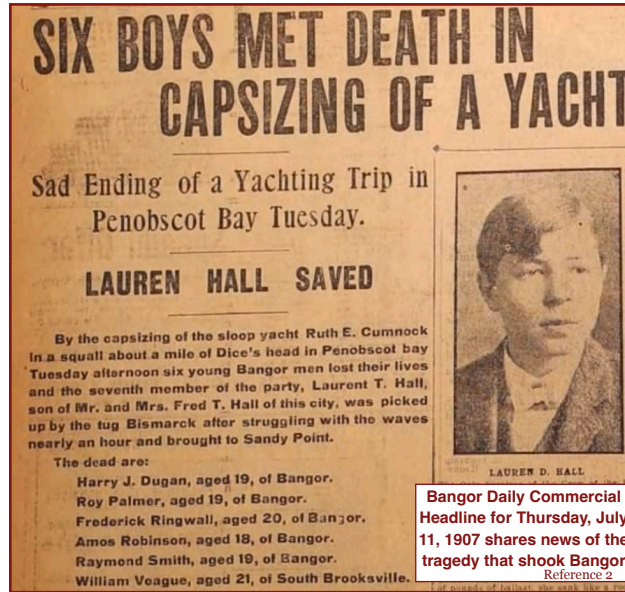
SPECIAL HALLOWEEN TOUR OF
BANGOR'S GARDEN CEMETERY
OCTOBER 24 - 25!
[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP!](#)

The Bangor Historical Society's Quarterly Newsletter

The Phantom Squall of 1907: Bangor Tragedy Remembered

On the morning of July 9, 1907, seven young men from Bangor set out on what promised to be a perfect summer adventure. The sloop yacht *Ruth E. Cumnock* cut smoothly through the waters of Penobscot Bay as the group of friends sailed toward Castine, their spirits high and the weather

fair. Among them were Harry J. Dugan, 19, a recent graduate of Bangor High School; Frederick Ringwall, 20, son of Knut Ringwall, who conducted the Bijou Theatre band; and five other companions, including young Lauren Hall.⁴ None could imagine the nightmare that would unfold before day's end. *The Ruth E. Cumnock* was described as a "stanch little boat," but as the afternoon wore on and the party began their return journey, nature revealed a darker face. Off the coast of Castine, without warning, the sky



Bangor Daily Commercial
Headline for Thursday, July
11, 1907 shares news of the
tragedy that shook Bangor
Reference 2

darkened and a violent squall descended upon them with supernatural swiftness. The sudden winds and waves proved too much for the small yacht. In moments, the vessel capsized, hurling all seven young men into the churning waters of the bay.⁵ What followed was 45

minutes of pure terror—a desperate struggle against cold water, treacherous currents, and the relentless pull of the deep. Lauren Hall, realizing his heavy, waterlogged clothing was dragging him down like an anchor, made a desperate decision. He stripped off his garments in the frigid water, leaving himself nearly naked but able to stay afloat. Around him, his six companions fought their own losing battles against the sea. One by one, Hall watched helplessly as his friends succumbed to exhaustion and the merciless waters. Dugan, who had just

See "Loss" on Page 2

Hollywood at Mount Hope: The Making of *Pet Sematary*

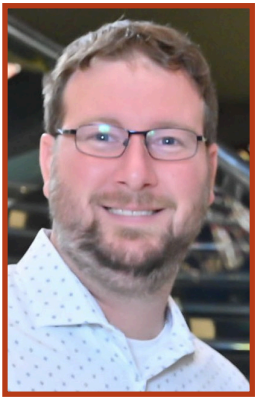
In the autumn of 1988, Mount Hope Cemetery became an unlikely movie set when Hollywood arrived in Bangor to film Stephen King's *Pet Sematary*. From September 15 to November 11, 1988, our historic cemetery—the second-oldest garden cemetery in the United States—took on a darker role as the fictional Pleasantview Cemetery in the film adaptation of King's 1983 novel.⁹ Designed by architect Charles G. Bryant in 1834, Mount Hope embraces 264 acres of land

along the Penobscot River. Director Mary Lambert chose Mount Hope for its atmospheric Victorian landscaping and winding paths, which provided the perfect gothic backdrop for the story's funeral scenes. Lambert later admitted she became so enamored with Maine's various locales that her first



The Master of Horror in the movie
Reference 3

See "Mount Hope" on Page 2



Curator's Corner

2025 has been a great year, and it is not over yet! **The Thomas A. Hill House** will be open from Monday to Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., for the remainder of the month. If you haven't visited our exhibit, **Bangor's Cultural Canvas**, be sure to stop by before the end of the month to see the amazing artwork currently on display. Our fall favorite **Ghostly Bangor Walking Tours** continue throughout the month of October, on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, starting at 7:00 p.m. Our **Darker Mount Hope Cemetery** tours are scheduled for October 24th & 25th. All of our tour tickets can be purchased on our website, by phone, or in person at the Hill House during open hours.

We will once again be having **Holidays at Hill House** in December. While we are closed in November, we will transform the house into a festive wonderland and reopen for public viewing on Friday, December 5th. Although winter will arrive sooner than we would like, please note that private tours, research requests, and presentations can still be scheduled. I would be happy to bring one of our presentations or lead a tour for your group or organization. If interested, please email me at curator@bangorhistoricalsociety.org. Hope to see you soon.

- Matt Bishop

Loss of Boys Still Haunts After A Century

(Continued from Page 1) graduated and had his whole future ahead of him. Ringwall, barely twenty years old. Amos Robinson, Fred Hall, William Veague, Raymond Smith—all strong young men, but no match for Penobscot Bay's fury. Their screams and struggles grew fainter until, finally, Hall was alone with only the wind and waves. The crew of the tug *Bismarck* spotted something in the water—a lone figure, nearly naked, barely clinging to consciousness.⁶ They pulled the exhausted boy aboard and raised distress signals. Several small boats rushed from the nearby shore to assist, but they arrived at a scene of devastation. Six young lives had been claimed by the sea. Local papers published photographs of the victims, their youthful faces staring out from the page—a haunting gallery of promise unfulfilled. **The Bangor Daily News** called it a "THRILLING TALE OF SOLE SURVIVOR," though for Hall, survival meant carrying the weight of that terrible day forever.⁷ The tragedy devastated the close-knit Bangor community. These weren't strangers—they were sons, brothers, classmates, friends. In the following days, hearses carried the recovered bodies back to grieving families on Hammond Street, Somerset Street, and Kenduskeag Avenue. Now, more than a century later, if you're on Penobscot Bay and the wind or a fast-moving summer storm approaches, remember these lost sons of Bangor and all the promise lost with them in the depths of the Atlantic.



Mount Hope's Spooky Ambiance Big Part of King Movie Lore

(continued from Page 1) cut was rather overstuffed with atmosphere, saying "Maine was such a character in the story."¹⁰ King himself wrote the screenplay and was deeply involved in the filming process, consulting with Lambert frequently on her ideas for the story and any deviations from the script she wished to make. He even made a memorable cameo appearance as a minister conducting a funeral service—filmed on the State Street side of the cemetery.



Pet Sematary Film Clip
Reference 12

The cemetery's iconic monuments and landscaping can be spotted throughout the film, giving horror fans worldwide a glimpse of our city's historic landscape. The filming employed many local residents, making it a genuine community affair. The production brought considerable excitement to Bangor. As stipulated by King when selling the rights, **Pet Sematary** was shot in Maine, where the story

was set, ensuring authentic Maine locations and atmosphere. The economic boost and community involvement made the project memorable for many Bangor residents who participated or watched the filming unfold. The film was released on April 21, 1989, and grossed \$57.5 million at the box office on a budget of \$11.5 million, becoming a commercial success.¹¹ For many viewers worldwide, Mount Hope Cemetery became synonymous with the haunting story of loss, grief, and the supernatural that King had crafted.

Annual Awards Celebrate Local History Makers and Storytellers

BHS Board President Risteen Bahr presents the Nelson Durgin Generations of Service Award to Brookings Smith Funeral Home. Brookings Smith has served the greater Bangor area since 1860.



The Great Gatsby-themed gala provided multiple options for period attire and Art Deco fun!

BHS Curator Matt Bishop presents the Judge John Godfrey Witness to History Award to The Bangor Daily News. The BDN was founded in 1889.



Full List of Award Recipients

Judge John E. Godfrey Witness to History Award – Bangor Daily News

Founding Fathers Preservation & Stewardship Award – City of Bangor

Nelson E. Durgin Generations of Service – Brookings-Smith, Eaton-Peabody, & Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center

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Society

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— BANGOR —

CROSS
INSURANCE

Did You Know? Father John Bapst Was a Pioneer of 1850s Maine and Helped Found Boston College in 1859



Portrait of Father John Bapst
Reference 13

Father John Bapst's story is one of remarkable courage that left an indelible mark on Bangor and American Catholic history during a period of intense religious intolerance. Born in Switzerland on December 17, 1815, John Bapst entered the Jesuit order at the age of 19 and was ordained in 1846. When the Jesuits were expelled from Switzerland the following year, he volunteered for the American missions, arriving in New York in 1848, having spoken no English. His first assignment sent him to Old Town, to minister to the Penobscot people who had been without a priest for 20 years. Despite the danger and language barrier, Bapst mastered the Penobscot language within three months. He established temperance societies, reconciled warring factions, and tended the sick during a devastating cholera epidemic.¹⁴ Bapst developed profound respect for the Penobscot people, challenging the racist attitudes of his era. He wrote admiringly: "Those who represent the Indians as a degenerate race are certainly wrong. Generally, their judgment is sounder, their mind more masculine, their character more energetic and their passions stronger than the whites'."¹⁵

By 1850, Bapst's ministry expanded to serve Irish and Canadian Catholic immigrants across a 200-square-mile territory, including Ellsworth and Bangor. He built churches, formed communities, and even converted some Protestants—achievements that earned him powerful enemies. In Ellsworth, controversy erupted when Bapst advocated for Catholic children to be exempted from reading the Protestant King James Bible in public schools. The Know-Nothing Party, a nativist movement hostile to Catholics and immigrants, falsely claimed he was trying to ban the Bible from schools entirely. On October 14, 1854, tensions exploded into violence. A mob in Ellsworth kidnapped Father Bapst, stripped him, covered him with hot tar and feathers, and beat him severely. The attack made national headlines as one of the most notorious incidents of religious persecution in American history. Remarkably, the next morning Bapst celebrated Mass as promised. Even more remarkably, he refused to press charges, demonstrating a forgiveness that impressed even his critics.¹⁶ Undeterred, Bapst continued his work in Bangor. He established St. John's Catholic Church, placing a piece of his bloodstained cassock under the cornerstone on December 8, 1854—less than two months after the attack.¹⁷ In 1859, Bapst was transferred to Massachusetts, becoming the founding president of Boston College in 1863. In 1879, he developed dementia, reliving the Ellsworth attack in nightmares until his death on November 2, 1887. Today, John Bapst Memorial High School in Bangor honors his memory. His life exemplifies courage in the face of hatred, forgiveness toward enemies, and genuine respect for all people—a legacy that continues to inspire.



Save the Date for Upcoming Events:



Coming Soon!!

Join us for Holidays at Hill House!

Bangor Historical Society

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