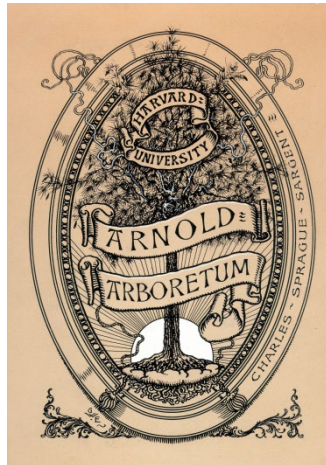


I A-6 BPR

Boston Park Rangers Program, 1981-1988: Guide



The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University

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Boston Park Rangers Program, 1981-1988: Guide Archives of the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University 125 Arborway, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

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Descriptive Summary

Repository: Arnold Arboretum, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Call No.: I A-6 BPR

Location: Archives

Title: Boston Park Rangers Program, 1981-1988: Guide

Date(s): 1981-1988

Creator: Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University.

Quantity: 8 linear inches (2 boxes)

Language of material: English

Abstract: The late 1970s and early 1980s saw an upswing in violence and vandalism in Boston, which led to a subsequent drop-off in visitation to city parks. In response the Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks, The National Association for Olmsted Parks, Friends of the Public Garden and Common, and the Arnold Arboretum collaborated to create the Boston Park Ranger Program.

Note: Access to Finding Aid record in [HOLLIS](#).

Preferred Citation: Boston Park Rangers Program. Archives of the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University.

Additional Material: For the records of an independent, non-profit organization which provided funding for the Park Rangers Program and other programs at the Arboretum See [Records of the Arnold Arboretum Committee, 1982-1988](#).

Acquisition Information

Provenance: The material was assembled by Arboretum staff who worked on the creation and implementation of the program including the Director, Peter Ashton, his assistant, Wendy Marks, and Kate Nixon, the Arboretum's Public Relations Officer. The collection was transferred from the Arnold Arboretum's departmental holdings to the Arboretum's Archives in 1989.

Processing: March 2001, Lisa Pearson, revised 2006, 2012 Sheila Connor, revised 2023, 2024 Larissa Glasser.

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Historical Note



Boston Park Rangers 1983

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw an upswing in violence and vandalism in Boston, which led to a subsequent drop-off in visitation to city parks. Responding to the growing concern for Boston's parklands, in 1982, under the aegis and management of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, the Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks, The National Association for Olmsted Parks, Friends of the Public Garden

and Common, and the Arnold Arboretum collaborated to create the Boston Park Ranger Program. The concept of park rangers originated in the nineteenth century with Frederick Law Olmsted. Olmsted advised that there be a force of 'Park Keepers' to patrol the parks in an effort to prevent vandalism and to encourage the wise use of the City's parks.

The Boston Park Rangers program was based on the urban ranger program in New York City and operated seasonally from 1982 until 1988. During the first year, Boston Park Rangers patrolled the Boston Common, the Public Garden, the Commonwealth Avenue Mall, and the Arnold Arboretum. That first year the Boston Park Ranger Mounted Unit, which was established through a coordinated effort with the Boston Police Department and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, patrolled the Arboretum on horseback. In the following years the Ranger program was expanded to include Franklin Park, Jamaica Pond and the Back Bay Fens.



Mounted Park Rangers at the Arboretum 1983

The Mounted Park Rangers patrol all nine parks in the Emerald Necklace: Boston Garden, Boston Common, Commonwealth Avenue Mall, Back Bay Fens, the Riverway, Olmsted Park, Jamaica Pond, Arnold Arboretum and Franklin Park and have been supported, in part, by The Friends of the Boston Park Rangers Mounted Unit which was formed in 2010. The Park Rangers Program provides year round security and safety, visitor services, resource management and interpretive programming not only in the nine Emerald Necklace parks, but also in Boston's historic burying grounds, neighborhood parks and playgrounds.

Scope and Content

The bulk of the materials consist of administrative materials including board minutes budgets and correspondence, fundraising and programming materials, public relations material, newspaper clippings, photographs and a videotape.

Arrangement

The Records of the Boston Park Rangers Program is organized in three series with Series I divided into seven subseries.

Series I: Administrative records and correspondence

- **Subseries I:** General Records and Correspondence
- **Subseries II:** Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks
- **Subseries III:** Fundraising
- **Subseries IV:** Advisory Board Minutes
- **Subseries V:** Programming Materials
- **Subseries VI:** Public Relations
- **Subseries VII:** Budget and Expenses

Series II: Ranger program background and proposal materials

Series III: Miscellaneous materials

Container List

Box 1:

Series I: Administrative records

Folder

- 1:** Includes memos, agendas, press releases, newspaper clippings, newsletters, and lists of donors, requests to foundations, funding sources, and correspondence. Correspondents include Peter Ashton, Valerie Burns, Peter Del Tredici, Richard Doherty, Betsy Shure Gross, Maura Hennigan, Wendy Marks, Robert McCoy, Kate Nixon, A. Schumacher

Subseries I: General Records and Correspondence: Agendas, transcripts, memos, notes, correspondence.

Folder

- 1:** 1981-1983
- 2:** 1984-1988



Subseries II: Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks: Agenda, list of officers, correspondence

Folder

3: 1982-1984

Subseries III: Fundraising: Requests for funding, letters from donors, invitations to fundraising functions, vouchers, lists of contributors, other related correspondence

Folder

4: 1983

5: 1984

6: 1985

7: 1986

Subseries IV: Advisory Board Minutes: Members of the Boston Park Rangers Board of Advisors: Katherine Abbott, Peter S. Ashton, Nicholas Balasalle, Paul V. Bilicki, Edward J. Burke, Barry Cheslin, Clare Cotton, Richard Heath, Henry Lee, Vincent Lombardi, Wendy L. Marks, Paul Paget, Stella Trafford, Gerald Wright

Folder

8: 1983

9: 1984

10: 1985

Subseries V: Programming Materials: Tour schedules, advertisements, program guides, and related correspondence

Folder

11: 1982-1985

Subseries VI: Public Relations: Press releases, newspaper articles (photocopies and some originals), newsletter, letters to the editor, other related correspondence

Folder

12: 1982

13: 1983

14: 1984

15: 1985

16: 1986

17: 1987

18: 1988, and undated



Mounted Park Ranger, unidentified, undated, photographer unknown

Subseries VII: Budget and Expenses: Budgets, invoices, brochures, warranties and related notes

19: 1982–1984

**Series II: Ranger Program Proposals, Evaluations, Job Descriptions
Folder**

- 1:** New York City Urban Rangers Program
- 2:** Ranger Program Proposals, 1982. Drafts: annotations by Wendy Marks, Cornelia McMurtrie, Peter Ashton, Kate Nixon
- 3:** Ranger Program Proposals, 1982 Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks Urban Park Ranger Program, Cornelia McMurtrie
- 4:** Ranger Program Completed Proposal, 1982
- 5:** Recruiting, Hiring, Job Descriptions 1982–1985
- 6:** Pilot Year Evaluation Report, 1983
- 7:** Evaluation Report, 1984
- 8:** Evaluation Report, 1988



Mounted Park Rangers at the Arnold Arboretum, undated, photographer unknown

**Series III: Miscellaneous Materials
Folder**

- 1:** Incident Reports: 1983, 1987
- 2:** Advertising Materials, Letterhead
- 3:** Images:
 - 1982, including photographs of Robert McCoy, Peter Ashton
 - 1983, including photographs of Greg Light, Gene Survillo, Robert McCoy, Peter Ashton, Maura Hennigan
 - 1984, including photographs of mounted rangers
 - 1985, including photograph of Kate Nixon, Peter Ashton
 - Photographs of mounted rangers, and one of ranger Maryann Nagle, undated
 - 10, 35mm slides, undated
- 4:** *Boston Park Rangers* (VHS Videotape)



Boston Mounted Park Rangers patrolling the Arboretum, Forest Hills Road, 1991