



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Tonya Robles, OPA Managing Director

(207) 934-9068, ext. 203

opa@oceanpark.org

THE OCEAN PARK ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES 125 YEARS WITH GALA ANNIVERSARY BANQUET

OCEAN PARK, MAINE – Over 200 people turned out to help the Ocean Park Association celebrate its 125th Anniversary at a banquet on August 4. The 125-year-old Temple was the site of the event, and its octagonal auditorium was transformed from a worship space into an elegant banquet room. Guests were treated to a three-course meal catered by 1st Class Catering of Saco. A cake featuring a picture of the Temple was prepared by the European Bakery in Falmouth, and the floral decorations were designed by Artistry in Bloom of Saco. Pre-banquet music was provided by cellist (and Ocean Park Association Administrative Assistant) Jerusha Robinson.

Current Ocean Park Association President Susan I. Evans emceed the banquet. President Evans also moderated a pre-banquet discussion forum with eight of the nine past presidents of the Association: Audrey DeLoffi, Donald Dickinson, Frank Gwalthney, Dr. William S. Holt, Jack Jackson, Brian Olsen, Rev. Victor Scalise, Jr., and Rev. George H. Sinclair. “The anniversary banquet was a fitting way to pay tribute to the traditions and heritage that we value in Ocean Park,” explained Susan Evans.

After an opening prayer by former Ocean Park Association President Rev. Victor Scalise Jr., the banquet program featured tributes and proclamations from federal, state, and local officials. Tributes were given by U.S. Senator Olympia J. Snowe, U.S. Senator Susan M. Collins, Congressman Thomas H. Allen, and Governor John E. Baldacci and read by Saco Mayor Emeritus Bill Johnson. Governor Baldacci proclaimed August 4, 2006 “Ocean Park Association Day” in the state of Maine. The Old Orchard Beach Town Council proclamation was presented by Assistant Town Manager V. Louise Reid.

“What Is Past Is Prologue,” a play commissioned for the anniversary by Rev. Dr. Vincent deGregoris, was presented by Ocean Park performers Charlotte deGregoris, Vincent deGregoris, Frank Gwalthney, Nancy MacNider, and Milt Ryder. Rev. deGregoris is Professor Emeritus in Pastoral Care and Counseling of Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and has produced several dramas over the last several years at Ocean Park, among them “Love Letters”, “The World of Karl Sandburg”, “Aria da Capo” and the full-length Ocean Park Centennial drama in 1981.

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The keynote speaker was Rev. Prof. Peter Gomes. Since 1970 Professor Gomes has served in The Memorial Church, Harvard University; and since 1974 as Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and Pusey Minister in The Memorial Church. A member of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and of the Faculty of Divinity of Harvard University, Prof. Gomes holds degrees from Bates College (A.B., 1965), and from the Harvard Divinity School (S.T.B., 1968); and thirty-three honorary degrees. Widely regarded as one of America's most distinguished preachers, Prof. Gomes fulfills preaching and lecturing engagements throughout America and the British Isles. Profiled by Robert Boynton in *The New Yorker*, and interviewed by Morley Safer on *60 Minutes*, Rev. Gomes was included in the summer 1999 premiere issue of *Talk* magazine as part of its feature article, 'The Best Talkers in America: Fifty Big Mouths We Hope Will Never Shut Up.' Rev. Gomes is an annual guest preacher at the Ocean Park Temple. "The words of Peter Gomes helped us to look forward," declared current Ocean Park Association President Susan Evans, "as we honored our past."

The 125th Anniversary Celebration Festival was sponsored in part by Saco and Biddeford Savings Institution and Clark Associates Insurance. Ocean Park is a Chautauqua community in its 125th season of providing religious, cultural, educational, and recreational programs. For more information, visit the website at www.oceanpark.org.

More than just a day at the beach...



Past Presidents Forum



The Temple Transformed



Rev. Prof. Peter Gomes