

Beverly Cleary Sculpture Garden

By Doris Kimmel

The Beverly Cleary Sculpture Garden, located on the west side of Grant Park in northeast Portland, consists of three bronze statues grouped around a splash fountain. The figures represent three beloved characters from children's author Beverly Cleary's books: Ramona Quimby, Henry Huggins, and Henry's dog Ribsby. Portland artist Lee Hunt created the statues. Granite plaques around the fountain are engraved with the titles of Beverly Cleary's books that are set in Portland. The sculpture garden was dedicated on October 13, 1995.

Cleary grew up in the neighborhood and played in Grant Park as a child, and many of the events in her books take place in the park and on neighboring streets. Klickitat Street, where Henry and his friends live, is located a few blocks north of the park.

Creating the sculpture garden took five years of fund-raising efforts. Co-chairs Heather Johnson, Doris Kimmel, and treasurer Jan Whelan led those efforts and managed the building of the site. Children all over the United States held penny drives to raise money, and contributions came from every state as well as several Canadian provinces. The sculpture garden is one of the few memorials in the United States dedicated to a children's author.

Sources

Hardt, Ulrich H., ed. "Beverly Cleary: A Retrospective," Oregon English Journal, Vol. XVII, No. 1, Spring 1995.

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