

Tiny

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The tiny house itself is a 10-by-14-foot building that includes an 8-by-10 loft with a bed. There is also a “vintage 1970s” sleeper sofa on the ground floor.

“Technically, four people can sleep there,” Cameron said. “But it takes the right four people.”

To date, more than 400 people have stayed in Cameron’s tiny house and his reviews on Airbnb have been very positive.

“I have this instruction sheet I leave for people and handouts about the house itself,” he said. “I really want to make it a user-friendly experience so it does not deter people who may not necessarily be accustomed to that secluded of an area or such a primitive system.”

The instructions cover everything from how to build a fire in the small woodstove to where the best hiking trails may be found.

“I make myself available at all times,” Cameron said. “So if anyone has a question — no matter how stupid they think it is — I want them to ask me.”

Cameron bought the Crooked River property in 2009 after spending several years as an undergraduate student “hopping from one long-term house-sitting gig to another and constantly doing projects for other people.”

Tired of having no place to call his own, Cameron said he knew buying his own property would allow him his own creative investment.

“It was an impulsive decision,” he said. “But it’s one I will never regret.”

He readily admits he knew nothing about building any sort of home when he started, but thanks to a three-day tiny home building workshop in Vermont, library books and multiple



LON CAMERON

This tiny house on the Crooked River in southern Maine is available for rent to anyone looking for some peace and quiet or the opportunity to be temporarily tiny.

how-to videos on YouTube, he was able to figure it out.

He also said his dream of building his own home was one he downsized.

“I wanted a cedar log home and something really nice, like 1,200 square feet,” he said. “But when I started looking at cost and a mortgage of \$800 or \$900 a month, I knew I did not want to be that tied down.”

After reading up on tiny houses and visiting friends in Orono who lived in a mobile tiny house, Cameron decided that was the way to go.

“I learned the tools to use and the math to figure it out, and from that knowledge I was able to plunge in and figure out how to build the house,” he said. “It took a year’s worth of weekends. I don’t know if I will ever do it

again.”

Cameron said the work would have gone faster if he had power tools instead of using hammers and nails.

“It certainly did give me some perspective on how efficient a job can be if you have the right tools,” he said with a laugh.

Cameron is finishing up his last year in the University of New England’s physician’s assistant program. While he enjoys visiting his tiny house, he is not ready to take the plunge into going tiny full time.

“I did live in it for six weeks,” he said, after a family health emergency required he be in the area. “It was amazing. Living there was really built-in therapy that I needed to navigate the issues I was dealing with.”

Which is really the tiny rental’s biggest attraction, he said.

“People like that I am selling an experience. We are all so busy these days that we can’t get out of our own way,” Cameron said. “It’s become a skill to sit with yourself and be at peace and just think.”

Stacy Smith of New Jersey is one of the 400 who has stayed at the tiny house and said the experience was well worth it.

“I was spending a week in Maine traveling by myself and did think twice about staying there because I was on my own,” she said. “But I am so glad I did. It is such a magical place. I totally plan to go back.”

A fan of the tiny house movement and faithful viewer of various television shows devoted to the subject, Smith said she also decided to stay at Cameron’s rental for the downsized experience.

“I really wanted to see what that was like,” she said. “Yeah, I could totally do it.”

In the winter the experience includes skiing or snowshoeing about a mile into the tiny house.

“People love it,” Cameron said. “I leave a shovel and cargo sled for them, and they love the idea of going into the middle of nowhere and heating up this cozy little home.”

Cameron keeps the rental stocked with dry goods, dishes, pots and pans, toilet paper and firewood.

There must be something to the whole tiny house experience because Cameron said this is shaping up to be his third and busiest summer with only two open weekends left.

“It’s inspiring for people to feel like they can try out a tiny house and that it might not be out of the realm of possibility for them to live in one,” he said. “There is really something to be said for people who want to do that.”

Rock

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become a star. It’s about a dream — a love of music and a dream. I think she’s relatable to a lot of people.”

Perhaps most important is that Robinson relates to her character on a personal level.

“I’m originally from Bucksport — a very small town — and being the only artsy person in my family, having to explain what my life is and what I do is really hard sometimes. I made a big move to Florida, left my friends, family and theater company, in pursuit of a dream.”

Robinson is pursuing her Master of Fine Arts in theater and acting performance at the University of Florida.

“The general misconception that people have is that acting is only pursued seriously in New York or Los Angeles. Of course, those places are massive, and many people go there to be ‘stars.’ However, to me, a working actor is a successful actor. Location doesn’t really matter, as long as one is booking consistent roles,” Robinson said in an email.

But it isn’t just the characters who are relatable. For the actors and actresses at PTC, this show tells a story some of them are familiar with.

“It’s all about dreams and realizing that dreams are reality,” said Alekzander Sayers, who plays the character Franz, a German developer and son of Hertz, played by actor Neil Graham.

“I still have family who ask me what I’m doing with my life, and I’m like ‘this — this is what I’m doing,’” Sayers said. He is one of many in the cast who have found bringing these characters to life an exciting journey that parallels their own in many ways.

But for every dreamer there is a villain. Graham plays the character Hertz, a “megalomaniac real estate developer,” he said.

“If there was a villain in this show, it would probably be him,” Graham said.

“I was brought up at the age that the main characters were. This show has captured that time period. This show is able to bridge the gap between somebody my age and somebody [actress Catie Forthofer’s] age. Both are able to pull that joy from that time period,” Graham, who is in his 40s, said, referring to Forthofer, a 20-year-old who plays Constance. It’s her first professional production.

Actor Bob Potts’ two characters, Mayor and Ja’Keith, acts as a roadblock on the way to the success of the lead characters, Drew (Ira Kramer) and Sherrie (Robinson).

“For both of my characters, it’s about money at the end of the day,” Potts, a 49-year-old Maine native,

said. “My characters mostly exist to help the leads come to their own realizations — that they have to follow their dreams and that it’s not always about money.”

That’s a realization that hits close to home for Potts. When Potts was young, he considered applying to the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York but put his dreams on hold.

“I feel like I’m living vicari-

ously through them,” Potts said of the younger actors and actresses in the show. “My dad, who was a Korean War vet and worked in the mill, said, ‘If you do that, you’ll wait tables your whole damn life.’ And I thought, ‘yeah, he’s probably right.’”

Potts instead focused on a career in broadcasting and later marketing. But eventually he found his way back to acting.

Potts has been part of the cast for a variety of shows with Penobscot Theatre Company, including “The Rocky Horror Picture Show,” “The Wizard of Oz,” “Annie” and “Cinderella: A New Telling of an Old Tale.” He also has performed with Ten Bucks Theatre and in the Bangor Rotary Club’s annual music show, “Music Off Broadway.” He currently works in public relations and communications for Emera Maine.

“Being in this with all these people just does something for my soul,” he said.

Above all, though, this show is a good time — though it may not be suitable for all audiences. Some parts can be a little risqué, the cast said.

“It’s that point in the year where the weather in Maine is finally starting to change,” Budd said. “There’s almost a visible lifting of spirits across the community. And what better way to celebrate than with a big musical? It’s for this region and for the people here who want to come together for an unforgettable time.”

This is the seventh and final production for the PTC’s 2015-2016 season.

Tickets for “Rock of Ages” can be purchased online at penobscottheatre.org, by phone at 207-942-3333 or at the box office at the Bangor Opera House.

Hartin

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I was going to Gosselin’s Bakery.

I’d tried to stop a couple times before, but it was always after they had closed that I found myself with free time, so I made a point to rise early and head over to the bakery to get my doughnut fix — and talk to one of the people behind the business’ success, Yvette Stewart.

She was busy helping customers when I walked in, so I bided my time, taking in the sweet aroma of fresh baked goods and watching her work. Behind the counter there was a variety of doughnuts to choose from — coconut, butter crunch, chocolate glazed, raspberry-filled — you name it, they had it.

After the customer left I approached Yvette and she was more than happy to tell me all about Gosselin’s — a family business that passed into the hands of Yvette, her husband and her siblings after her father, Harvey Jr., passed away and her mother, Annette, retired.

This year marks 71 years that Gosselin’s has been in business. Yvette is part of the third generation of Gosselin’s to run the bakery, which began with Yvette’s grandparents, Harvey Gos-

selin Sr. and Dorothy Gosselin, who opened the business in 1945. After Harvey Sr. passed in 1966, Yvette’s father took over.

“Six years ago my father became ill and my mother got hurt,” Yvette told me. The main question then became a difficult one to ask: “What will be done with the bakery?”

As Yvette’s mother was getting wheeled into surgery after being injured, Yvette, her husband and her brothers assured her that they could handle it, but they had a couple questions first.

“We were so green. My mother was getting wheeled into surgery and we were like, ‘Mum, how much are doughnuts?’” Yvette said with a laugh.

Her mother’s response was simple: “Don’t worry, the customers will let you know.”

A loyal customer base was established long ago and would help the place stay afloat, but it was also baker Bob Cooper’s training under Harvey Jr. that would ensure the continued success of the business.

“Bob trained with my dad side by side for years,” Yvette told me. Bob works at the bakery six nights per week, preparing 400 dozen doughnuts every night for customers to enjoy the next morning. He hand rolls and cuts some of the doughnuts

and mixes the cake doughnuts by hand, which are then cut by machine because he has to make so many of them.

The doughnuts are finished off by hand as well. They’re glazed, coconut-ed, crunch-ed, sugared and filled — all by Bob. If not for him and the two baker’s helpers and delivery person, Yvette says she’s not sure where the business would be.

“He deserves all the credit,” she said.

Yvette doesn’t bake, but she is the friendly face customers see at the Bangor-based business most mornings. Gosselin’s also has a Brewer branch, which opened in 2014.

Yvette said that the only regret she has is not paying closer attention when she had the chance.

“I wish I had taken it more seriously when I was younger,” she said. She has quickly realized how much hard work her parents and her grandparents before them put into the bakery.

“Being here I’ve realized how much work it is, how lucky we are with our customers and how much of a legacy we are,” she said. Yvette said she has fond memories of growing up with a bakery in the family. She particularly remembers that when she was younger, her parents would call the plain coconut doughnuts “coconut cream” doughnuts.

Not many people call them by that anymore, but every so often one will walk in.

“I know they’ve been customer for a long time when they call them that,” she said.

This Friday marks National Doughnut Day, which is one of Gosselin’s busiest days of the year, preceded only by Christmas Eve.


I hope to make a stop in on Friday morning before all the doughnuts run out (which happens every so often). At 334 Harlow St., the business is open 5 to 11 a.m. Monday through Friday and 5 to 10:30 a.m. on Saturday — and be sure to bring cash or a check, as they don’t take debit or credit cards.

If you walk in, you’ll likely be met by Yvette, a friendly face who is happy to show up to work in the morning and continue the legacy her family left behind.

“I have so much fun,” she told me.

I handed Yvette 90 cents in exchange for a chocolate coconut doughnut and was about to walk out the door when I decided to get another — a raspberry-filled. My advice? If you can’t decide on which to get, just get both.

Shelby Hartin writes about arts, culture and food. Read more in her blog Hartin Soul, which can be found at hartin.bangordailynews.com.



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THURSDAY	FRIDAY & SATURDAY	SUNDAY
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