

News Release

- Contact: Greg Paxton, Executive Director
(o) 207.847.3577 (c) 207.232.5995

greg@mainepreservation.org

- Contact: Sarah Hansen, Real Estate Manager
(o) 207.847.3577 (c) 207.747.7543

sarah@mainepreservation.org

More information and photos are available at mainepreservation.org.



Maine Preservation Celebrates 17 Exemplary Revitalization Projects with 2017 Honor Awards

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On Tuesday, November 7, Maine Preservation announced winners of the 2017 Honor Awards, celebrating outstanding examples of historic preservation and revitalization statewide and recognizing the owners, professionals, preservationists and partners who make them possible.

The 2017 Honor Awards, held at the Portland Country Club in Falmouth, recognized 16 projects and one individual nominated earlier this year.

“Taking vacant and underutilized historic buildings and adaptively using and updating them is an essential ingredient for community revitalization and vitality,” said Maine Preservation Executive Director Greg Paxton. “When completed these buildings lift the economics of the areas around them and the spirits of the citizens benefitting from them. These projects recall the history of their surrounds and our predecessors that built and used them, while filling current needs. And these well-built buildings can be feasibly rehabilitated, economically operated and energy efficient. Maine Preservation is pleased to recognize these people and projects and the many benefits to Maine they provide.”

More detailed information on the 2017 Honor Awards may be found at mainepreservation.org.

The full list of Maine Preservation 2017 Honor Awardees (alphabetical by town):

2017 Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. Preservation Champion - Deb Andrews, Manager of Portland’s Historic Preservation Program, has been chosen as Maine Preservation’s 2017 Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. Preservation Champion for her lifetime achievement in historic preservation.

While serving as executive director of Greater Portland Landmarks from 1984-1990, she spearheaded establishment of a demolition delay ordinance in the City and ultimately adoption

of Portland's Historic Preservation Ordinance, during the period when a suit succeeded in preventing condo development on Long Wharf.

While Manager of the Historic Preservation Program since 1992, the transformation of the Old Port has been remarkable – from a largely vacant area into the most vibrant and highest-rent commercial district in the state. Commercial and Congress Streets have been named two of the Great Streets of America by the American Planning Association during her tenure. And Western Prom has revitalized into the highest value non-waterfront neighborhood in the state. Both districts illustrate the nationally documented result that good preservation raises property values – and the quality of the built environment in historic districts.

Augusta, D.W. Adams Building – Built in 1909 as the Bussell & Weston Co., the three-story department store, popular for its huge display windows and 12,000 square feet of floor space, was previously owned by D.W. Adams who operated his own store here until 1985 -- the same year it was listed in the National Register as one of the best surviving unaltered structures constructed as a department store in Maine. The property was purchased by Laura and Jason Gall] and the commercial space redone while the second and third floors, originally wide-open spaces, house six market-rate apartments. These residential spaces have brought new life to Water Street, and have helped inspire other projects, adding to the capital city's increasingly vibrant downtown.

Bar Harbor, Parish House at Saint Saviour's Church – Saint Saviour's Episcopal Church in Bar Harbor, constructed 1878, is the largest and tallest public building on Mount Desert Island. The church sanctuary was enlarged in 1885, and a rectory added a few years later, and in 1902 the Parish House, once a gatehouse for the 1880s summer cottage called "Faraway" was acquired. Though St. Saviour's is beloved, by 2013 the church and associated outbuildings had fallen into a state of partial disrepair. The Parish did not have the necessary funds to maintain the building and decided to donate the Parish House to Local Solutions. Working with Community Housing of Maine, the historic integrity of this significant local building was preserved while adapting the space for much-needed adult disabled housing. Six new residents of the Parish House now have a place to call home where they enjoy the support they need, the chance to discover their strengths and gifts, and a welcome opportunity to contribute to the life of the community.

Bath, John E.L. Huse School Apartments – Named to honor Bath's first casualty of World War II, the John E.L. Huse Memorial School was constructed in 1942 to serve the children of Bath Iron Works employees. Today, thanks to an adaptive use project of the Szanton Company, the school retains its historic mid-century vibe while providing 59 units of much needed affordable housing for the deserving citizens of Bath. The community response has been overwhelming, and just a week after opening 78% of the units had been rented.

Bath, Winter Street Church, Preservation Timber Framing – Arron Sturgis, principal of Preservation Timber Framing, is an esteemed member of the Maine Preservation family, having served as both board president and a dedicated board member. His work in Bath on the 1843

Winter Street Church with Preservation Timber Framing produced a practical solution to restoring the fallen 27-foot high vaulted sanctuary ceiling that saved tens of thousands of dollars in scaffold rental expenses, met property owner Sagadahoc Preservation Inc.'s pressing challenges, and exemplified how traditional craftsmanship can neatly address contemporary building needs.

Biddeford, The Lofts at Saco Falls – The 20th century saw a huge shift in textile manufacturing from New England to the American South, and ultimately overseas. As orders dried up, it became impossible for the Saco-Lowell Shops in Biddeford to survive. By 2015, the building was virtually empty, and it had been years since any significant maintenance had been done. When the City of Biddeford decided to purchase and demolish its waste incinerator, the historic property next door had a second chance, and the Szanton Company snapped it up, creating 80 apartments. All units were leased by the end of the first month of availability – an eye-opening demonstration of the pent-up demand for high quality, affordable and market-rate new rental housing in Biddeford. An empty and forlorn structure facing demolition was transformed it into a state-of-the-art residence, while also creating a facility that helps to interpret the industrial history central to Biddeford's cultural identity.

Castine, Samuel P. Grindle House – In 1850, Samuel P. Grindle, a ship carpenter, purchased a parcel of land fronting the Castine Town Common and constructed a house in the Greek Revival style. Sadly, by the 1970s Grindle House was no longer a town treasure. Aluminum siding covered original clapboards and pilasters and the original entrance surround had been destroyed, windows replaced, and chimneys rebuilt. The interior itself was unfit for habitation, but miraculously the 1850s interior had survived. Today, thanks to the generous bequest of Deborah Pulliam, the Castine Historical Society has carefully rehabilitated the house into the historical society's offices and a sensitive new addition has allowed the space to transform into a hi-tech archival facility for the care and service of an expanding collection.

Corinna, The Stewart Library – Dedicated as a memorial to his parents by millionaire, Levi M. Stewart, the Stewart Free Library was designed by William H. Grimshaw and completed in 1898. Designed in the Italian Renaissance style, its defining clock tower, well over a century old, had deteriorated significantly due to wind-driven rain, freeze-thaw action and deferred maintenance. An initial design by an engineering firm proposed demolishing the top 30 feet of the tower and re-building it with a structural steel core. Thankfully, this approach was abandoned, and tireless efforts in support of the restoration and fundraising, including a major infusion by the Next Generation Foundation proved successful. The resulting structure demonstrates the rallying power of a small, rural Maine town when the cause for preservation is rooted in local civic pride.

Falmouth, Plummer School – The Plummer School has stood as a landmark in the town of Falmouth since its construction in the early 1930s. In 2016, after much community input and several failed redevelopment attempts, work began on converting the historic school into one of very few senior communities designed for moderate-income residents. The impact of Plummer

School's rehabilitation and re-use has been felt throughout the community of Falmouth. Besides providing much-needed senior housing, the revitalization of this space highlights the perseverance of a local community in protecting and celebrating one of the town's prized historic public buildings.

Harpwell, Elijah Kellogg Church – Built in the fall of 1843 and later named in honor of its first minister, the Elijah Kellogg Church has long been a community-gathering place. Unfortunately, time and deferred maintenance took a toll on the building and in 2013 an effort to restore and preserve the Elijah Kellogg Church started in earnest. This community-based preservation project exceeded the Congregation's ambitious goals. It remains a shining example of quality workmanship – both the 19th century structure and the recent rejuvenation.

Lewiston, 46 Lisbon Street – 46 Lisbon Street has been an iconic presence in downtown Lewiston since 1895. The home of Grant's Clothing for nearly 60 years, the building was purchased by Terry's Bridal in 1985—the same year it was added to the National Register of Historic Places. After sitting vacant for years, new owner Kevin Morin rehabilitated the neglected and vulnerable building, transforming it into housing and office space. The project is a fine example of small-scale downtown redevelopment, and of achievement possible with collaboration and vision.

Lewiston, Agora Grand Event Center & Inn at the Agora – Originally known as Kelsey Hall, the Italianate mansion on Walnut Street in Lewiston was designed and constructed in 1850, and in 1890 St. Patrick's Church was built on an adjacent lot. This impressive Neogothic building features asymmetrical towers, one of which held the record for Maine's tallest structure. The Portland Diocese closed the church in 2009, selling off most of the stained-glass windows as well as copper in the pipe organ, and it remained vacant until 2014 when Andrew Knight moved to Lewiston and fell in love with the property. He transformed Kelsey Hall into a boutique hotel he christened the Inn at the Agora and the St. Patrick's church into the Agora Grand Event Center. The financial success of a luxury hotel and event center in downtown Lewiston has not only challenged assumptions about the economic viability of such enterprises, but attracted new investors while insuring that two of Maine's stunning witnesses to the past remain a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Portland, Brick South – Destroyed by fire in the late 1890s, the 25,000-square foot Machine Shop of the Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad was rebuilt in 1904 and leased by Maine Central Railroad. During World War II the building was used to store steel for Liberty Ships then under construction there. Over the next 60 years, a series of owners proposed several development projects, but none ever got off the ground. In 2009 Forefront Partners began the long process of transforming the one-time industrial site into Portland's most dynamic new district. One of just two buildings surviving from the railroad era, today Brick South offers an experience unparalleled in southern Maine, celebrating Portland's rich history and serving as a versatile venue for weddings and trade shows, fundraisers and a variety of festivals. In May 2017, the building became the first LEED Core and Shell Gold project in Portland.

Portland, Grand Trunk Railway Co. Building (Gorham Savings Bank) – For years the all but forgotten Grand Trunk Railway Company Building, constructed in 1903 stood alone at the corner of India and Commercial streets. Once an outbuilding for the sprawling 1901 Grand Trunk Railroad Station, the three-story Company Building was all that remained after the station complex was thoughtlessly demolished beginning in 1961. But decades later, there was good news for the fortunate survivor. In 2016, seeing an ideal location for a suite of corporate office, Gorham Savings Bank purchased the building and initiated a rehabilitation project using historic tax credits. Without Gorham’s intervention and dedication, this vestige of Maine’s transportation history could have deteriorated beyond repair. Instead, it has become the bank’s busy, new downtown Portland headquarters.

Portland, Schlotterbeck & Foss Building – The Schlotterbeck & Foss Company was first incorporated in February 1892 as a premiere food and pharmaceuticals manufacturing facility in downtown Portland. The company’s 1927 home on Preble Street is significant as the only major Art Deco-style building designed by John Calvin Stevens and John Howard Stevens, and as one of the few surviving commercial buildings designed by the firm. The result of the project was the creation of 55 housing units in addition to first-floor office space, representing a vibrant new addition to Portland’s post-industrial Bayside neighborhood.

Portland, The Francis Hotel – Mellen E. Bolster, a wealthy dry goods purveyor, built a single-family residence in 1881 on Congress Street in Portland designed by Francis Fassett and John Calvin Stevens. Hay & Peabody Funeral Home purchased the Bolster House in the early 1900s. After standing vacant for over a decade, new owners converted the single-family residence into a 15-room hotel and spa with a 49-seat restaurant. The hotel is now named The Francis, in honor of one of its designers, and the restaurant is called Bolster, Snow & Co. This treasure on Congress Street is now available to the entire community, created more than 20 jobs and is helping fuel the renaissance of the Bramhall Square neighborhood.

Presque Isle, Maysville Museum – Every now and again, the rehabilitation of a local landmark transforms not only a neighborhood, but an entire community. The creation of the Maysville Museum in Presque Isle is just such a project. The 1939 structure built by the Grange as both a meeting hall and school was occupied until the grange disbanded and its home was sold to the City of Presque Isle. Tragically, after being sold to a private owner, the building fell prey to fire in 2004 and it was left vacant and exposed to the elements until 2011. That’s the year the Grange building was purchased by the Presque Isle Historical Society. An all-volunteer organization, the historical society has made an incredible community impact through this project. The completed museum recalls the one-room schoolhouses and the meeting places that once connected communities of Maine, and is a stellar example of community ownership in action.

Maine Preservation is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit member-based statewide historic preservation organization, that promotes and preserves historic places, buildings, downtowns and neighborhoods, strengthening the cultural and economic vitality of Maine communities.