



The statewide advocate for Rhode Island's historic places

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 17, 2023 – Providence, RI

2023 RHODY AWARDS FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION ANNOUNCED

Preserve Rhode Island (Preserve RI) celebrated the honorees of the 2023 Rhody Awards for Historic Preservation on Sunday at The United Theatre in Westerly. They included a range of projects and people from across the state.

Each year, Preserve RI showcases the best in historic preservation and its beneficial impacts to communities across Rhode Island. An independent jury of historians, architects, developers, community leaders and preservationists selected this year's finalists. Valerie Talmage, Executive Director of Preserve RI said, *"The Rhody Awards celebrates ordinary people taking extraordinary actions to make our world better--place by place, project by project. Today, when we are often disappointed with the prominent and powerful, how wonderful it is to find heroes here close to home."*

Preserve RI began the Rhody Awards to raise awareness among the general public on the important role historic preservation plays in our communities. Talmage continues, *"Historic preservation doesn't just preserve our historic fabric and a "sense of place" -- it's crucial to solving important problems Rhode Island faces. Each of this year's Rhody Awardees illustrates the power historic preservation has in creating much needed affordable housing, revitalizing local economies, protecting treasured coastal landscapes, and building and strengthening our communities."*

Preserve RI is the only statewide non-profit focused on historic preservation. Says Talmage, *"It takes more than celebrating heroes to make this work possible. It takes a community that values and supports historic preservation—creating policies and programs, incentives and training, that make this work feasible. At Preserve RI, we are proud to be at the forefront of helping create sensible zoning laws, incentives like the*

preserve
RHODE ISLAND

957 North Main Street, Providence, RI 02904 | www.PreserveRI.org | (401) 272-5101

State Historic Tax Credit, and programs that advise, train, and provide funding for owners of historic properties.”

To learn more about this year’s Rhody Awardees, videos of each winner can be viewed on the Preserve RI website: [2023 Rhody Award Winner Videos | preserve RI](#) . The public is encouraged to vote for their favorite project, the Audience Award. Voting is open until Thursday, October 19th at noon.

The 2023 Rhody Awards are:

PRESERVATION PROJECT AWARDS

Unity Park, Bristol - Joseph M. Brito Jr., CEO, Unity Park LLC

Thanks to Joe Brito’s vision and the cooperation of the town of Bristol, Unity Park has been transformed from an abandoned industrial site that originally housed the National Rubber Company into a dynamic new commercial complex that is home to “blue economy” businesses, restaurants, a coffee shop, brewery and distillery.

Broadmoor, Narragansett - Gregory Slattery and Scott Mansfield

For saving a 6,000 square foot Colonial Revival “summer cottage”. The 1896 cedar-shingle home would have been demolished, if not for their intrepid spirit and determination in moving not one, but two houses, to different lots in order to save this iconic treasure.

St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, Portsmouth

One of Rhode Island’s most architecturally significant buildings, St. Mary’s is an early prototype of the rural Gothic Revival churches designed by architect Richard Upjohn. A complete restoration of the exterior and interior was undertaken, restoring the interior to its original design while updating for environmental factors and ADA guidelines.

Copley Chambers, Providence - Marathon Construction and Development

Constructed in 1913, Copley Chambers was built as a rooming house for the influx of blue- and white-collar workers flooding into the city at that time. By 2020, the building had been vacant for a decade with severe structural issues. Using a combination of tax and other incentives, Marathon turned the building into 26 fully-furnished apartments and support services for young adults who have aged out of the foster care system.

Paragon Mill, Providence – The Alexander Company

Built in 1898 Paragon Mill was utilized as a textile and manufacturing facility until the early 2000s. By 2018, it was listed as one of Providence’s Most Endangered Properties. Alexander Company redeveloped the 125,000 square foot space into 101 low- and middle-income apartments and commercial space.

HOMEOWNER AWARDS

Jeff and Abby Boal - Fox Hill Farm, Jamestown

Almost a decade ago, Jeff and Abby began restoring a colonial farmhouse (parts of which date the 17th Century), acquiring the surrounding land to recreate a historic coastal farmstead, and protecting a disappearing landscape once common in Rhode Island. Today it is an active farm raising sheep, cattle, chickens, hard cider, vegetables, and honey.

Natasha Harrison and Ben Randall - ILZRO House, Foster

For the loving restoration of ILZRO House, designed and built in the 1970s by Marc Harrison, Natasha's father. A world-recognized designer, Marc was a pioneer in the "universal design" movement and created the one-of-a-kind Modernist house with differently-abled people in mind.

STEWARDSHIP AWARD

City of Pawtucket - Slater Park Looff Carousel, Pawtucket

Built in 1895, the Looff Carousel is one of only six carousels in the country still housed in its original building, thanks to the dedication of the city of Pawtucket and its citizens. In 1970 the carousel was scheduled to be torn down and the horses auctioned off. After public outcry, the city restored the carousel instead. It continues to operate today, thanks to the hard work of dedicated city employees and volunteers.

ANTOINETTE F. DOWNING VOLUNTEER AWARD

J. Hogue - ArtinRuins, Statewide

Twenty years ago, Providence-based web designer J. Hogue created ArtinRuins, a website dedicated to documenting endangered buildings throughout the state. It has become the definitive guide to the state's most endangered properties and a forum for Rhode Islanders to share their own memories tied to these landmarks.

About Preserve Rhode Island

Preserve Rhode Island is Rhode Island's statewide advocate for historic places. The 67-year-old nonprofit provides guidance for local preservation groups, finds productive and adaptive reuses for threatened buildings, advocates for the revitalization of historic places to stimulate local economies and engages the community through public programs at Lippitt House Museum.

For more information about the Rhody Awards and the winners, visit: [2023 Rhody Award Winners | preserveri](#)

Images of this year's winners and pictures from the event are available here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1VrXe36DQRyJZGHKd9rO7fvz3bs-VPz6Z>

Contact Alex Costa for use of video footage.

#####

Media Inquiries:

Alex Costa

acosta@preserveri.org

mobile: (401) 954-8813

www.preserveri.org