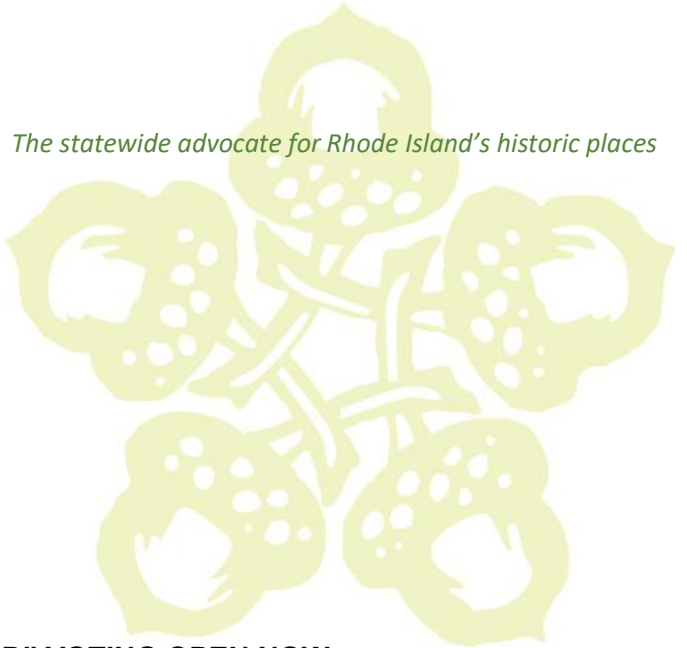




The statewide advocate for Rhode Island's historic places

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 20, 2025 – Providence, RI

2025 RHODY AWARDS: “AUDIENCE AWARD” VOTING OPEN NOW

Preserve Rhode Island (Preserve RI) celebrated the honorees of the 2025 Rhody Awards for Historic Preservation on Sunday, October 19 at the WaterFire Arts Center in Providence. Each year, Preserve RI celebrates the remarkable achievements of individuals and organizations for their efforts to utilize historic preservation to strengthen our communities, improve quality of life, and address social challenges. Awardees span from Westerly to Pawtucket to Tiverton, showing how preservation efforts positively impact communities across the state. This year's recipients are being honored for work that includes:

- protecting and restoring iconic landmarks that enhance the state's tourism industry and connect Rhode Islanders to our shared history
- converting abandoned mill buildings into much needed housing and commercial space for local businesses and restaurants
- creating community spaces that help build local economies

An independent jury of historians, architects, developers, community leaders, and preservationists had the difficult task of narrowing down the nominations to only 10 finalists. Sheryl Hack, Executive Director of Preserve RI said, *“The Rhody Awards is not just a celebration of preservation excellence but also showcases uplifting stories of citizens revitalizing their communities, building by building.”*

As the only statewide non-profit focused on historic preservation, Preserve RI does more than celebrate preservation. Says Hack, *“Although celebrating great preservation work is important, it is only a portion of Preserve RI's mission. We are proud to be at the forefront of creating sensible zoning laws, advocating for incentives like the State Historic Tax Credit, providing tools to permanently protect historic properties through preservation easements, and offering programs that advise, train, and provide funding for historic property owners.”*

To learn more about this year's Rhody Awardees, videos of each winner can be viewed on the Preserve RI website: [2025 Rhody Award Winner Videos | preserveri](#). The public is encouraged to vote for their favorite project and help Preserve RI determine the recipient of the Audience Award. Voting is open until Friday, October 24th at noon.

The 2025 Rhody Awardees are:

preserve
RHODE ISLAND

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Newport Collaborative Architects - *Frederick C. Williamson Professional Award*

Celebrated for their transformative impact on Rhode Island's built environment through a sustained ethos of creative collaboration grounded in historic preservation. Once the largest architectural firm in the state, the firm closed earlier this year after the three principals-- Mike Abbott, Glenn Gardiner, and John Grosvenor—retired after 44 years working together. Their work includes restoration of famous Rhode Island landmarks such as the Providence Performing Arts Center, the Providence Arcade, Barrington Town Hall, and the Audrain Auto Museum.

Margaret Whitehead - *Frederick C. Williamson Professional Award*

Awarded for her remarkable 34-year career as Curator of Blithewold Manor, Gardens & Arboretum in Bristol, Rhode Island. She was involved in the formation of Save Blithewold, Inc., a non-profit created to prevent Blithewold from being sold to private developers. As curator, she helped bring new attention to the historic house and the family that lived there by authoring two books, expanding the collection, and leading the effort to convert Blithewold's third floor into a state-of-the-art archive.

Matthew and Carly Callahan (Westerly)- *Homeowner Award*

Matthew and Carly Callahan purchased a Greek Revival home (c. 1840) with the hope to inspire others in Westerly to preserve and celebrate the historic charm and unique character of the town. The exterior, now fully restored, will last for another 100 years.

Independent Man (Providence) – *Community Impact Award*

After discovering damage to the marble cupola on which this treasured icon stands, the State quickly stepped in to ensure the statue's protection and safe removal from the top of the State House. To engage the community during the restoration of the Independent Man, the statue was placed in the rotunda of the State House, drawing crowds from 47 of the 50 states and countries ranging from Australia to Venezuela. Nearly 12,000 people visited the State House while the Independent Man was in residence, almost double from the year before. The statue was then re-gilded in alignment with its historic design and now stands sentry atop the State House once more.

Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company Complex (Providence) - *Preservation Project Award*

This adaptive reuse project has transformed a deteriorated industrial site comprising over two acres of brownfield lots and an entire city block into a thriving commercial and residential complex in Providence's West End. Using both state and federal historic tax credits, the project has added much needed housing to Providence with 64 residential units, while also providing space for local businesses across 20,000 square feet of commercial space, including studios, a restaurant, and offices.

Track 15 Food Hall (Providence) - *Preservation Project Award*

Marsella Development Corporation undertook a \$25 million project to transform part of the former Union Station train terminal into what is now the Track 15 Food Hall. At 18,000-square-feet, the project not only preserved the building's historic character, but has created a lively community space that showcases seven independent Rhode Island-based food vendors.

Isaac Bell House (Newport) - *Preservation Project Award*

From November of 2023 to July of 2024, the Preservation Society of Newport County conducted a \$3.3 million restoration of the Isaac Bell House. The scope of work included replacing all exterior shingles, restoring the shutters and windows, repointing the lower-level brick and chimneys, and more. A National Historic Landmark, Isaac Bell House is one of the best surviving examples of Shingle Style architecture in the country.

Fire Station #1 (Pawtucket) - *Preservation Project Award*

After closing in 2017 due to environmental hazards, the 1912 building laid vacant for years. The community urged town leaders to replace the station to support the west side of town. Fortunately, the City of Pawtucket elected to restore the historic station rather than build a new one. To accommodate present day needs, a sensitive addition expanded the square footage from 6,000 to 7,500 square feet and accommodates a ladder truck—an essential addition for modern fire response. The station has returned as a point of pride for the Woodlawn neighborhood.

Tiverton Four Corners (Tiverton) – *Preservation Project Award*

Tiverton Four Corners' historic charm is a delight to anyone passing through town, but that wasn't always the case. While many had a hand in its transformation starting in the 1960s, when Jim and Roz Weir arrived in the early 1980s things really started to take off. Over the next 40 years, they restored or built 13 buildings, adding a traditional style Meeting House for arts and education and a sculpture garden open to the public. Curating shops that would draw foot traffic and create a vibrant town center, the project was viable thanks to the Weirs' vision, determination, and ingenuity.

Poplar Point Lighthouse (North Kingstown) – *Stewardship Award*

In 1966, Russell Shippee's parents fulfilled a lifelong dream by acquiring the decommissioned Poplar Point Lighthouse (1831) as their residence. When Russell and Cathy Shippee eventually moved in, they restored the exterior and interiors, maintaining historic details while upgrading the home to modern living. Situated on a peninsula overlooking Wickford Village, the Shippees were often asked why the lighthouse was dark. With the help of David Zapatka, who helped them navigate the process, the lighthouse was re-illuminated last December for the first time in 142 years.

About Preserve Rhode Island

Preserve Rhode Island is Rhode Island's statewide advocate for historic places. The 69-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. Visit www.preserveri.org to learn more.

[Photos from the 2025 Rhody Awards can be found here.](#)

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