2016 Year in Review

As Preservation Greensboro passes the milestone of 50 years, the organization and its members have gained an enviable reputation in advancing the organization’s mission in the community.

Our mission remains saving our community’s historic and architectural treasures. Our members and volunteers recognize that we need greater economic investment in older neighborhoods, and that we see an advantage in our community being a unique and distinctive place to live. We seek to enhance a network of preservation-minded citizens who support the restoration and redevelopment of historic sites, and when that is not possible that we work to recycle old house parts to keep materials out of our landfill. We support Blandwood Mansion, a National Historic Landmark and celebrate big ideas of education, transportation, manufacturing, and architectural arts that are advanced through the Governor Morehead Forum.

We accomplish this through a strategy based on three approaches: Restore Explore Connect. As we work to build a social network in Greensboro that facilitates those who restore, then we offer programs that allow people to explore the architecture and history of our city, and provide venues and events that allow people to connect to our community through history, design, art, and architecture.

50 Years!

In 2016, we planned a full calendar of activities that allowed people to celebrate our Golden Jubilee. Our gala event in October was held with our friends at O.Henry Magazine beneath a tent on the grounds of Blandwood. With leadership from Anne Bowers, we recreated Frank Sinatra’s historic 1966 performance at the Sands with the Count Basie Orchestra. This incredible night included food, libations and dancing — a once in a 50-year event!
RESTORE

We facilitated the restoration of some great places in 2016. In College Hill, the finishing touches were made on the Angle House at 919 Spring Garden Street. Vacant after a major fire in 2011 and threatened with demolition, the 110-year-old house enjoyed a complete restoration as a single-family home that was completed thanks to our preservation partners with the College Hill Neighborhood Association, the Greensboro Redevelopment Commission, the Covington Foundation, and the 1772 Foundation.

In addition, two historic bungalows in the Glenwood neighborhood were transitioned back into private ownership last year. Initially moved from UNCG’s Union campus in 2011, the houses found a new location on Haywood Street thanks to our preservation partners at UNCG.

We spent energy preparing for work on the Cascade Saloon and we are so appreciative of our preservation partners on this Guilford County Landmark. The City of Greensboro entrusted us with ownership of the saloon with funding to chart a preservation path forward as an alternative to demolition. Additionally, the Covington Foundation provided funds for preservation, an anonymous donor contributed $250,000 in gap funding, and Downtown Greensboro is providing funds for façade preservation. Thanks also to our friends at First Citizens Bank and The Christman Company for their vision and leadership in this project that has drawn tremendous public attention to the catalyst of historic preservation.

Over the past year, Architectural Salvage collected a great deal of vintage building materials through our volunteer S.W.A.T. Team (Saving Worn-out Architectural Treasures). Their hard work extracting historic materials from places slated for demolition recycled material otherwise sent to our landfill. The Team worked with owners in numerous neighborhoods, including Rankin Road in northeast Greensboro, downtown, Westerwood, Sunset Hills, Pleasant Garden, and Gibsonville.

Items salvaged included stained glass windows, lighting fixtures, cabinetry, mantels, and hardwood flooring that were brought back to our showroom in East Greensboro. Located at 1028-B Huffman Street just beyond US 29 off Wendover. In addition to salvaging, the Team put on a Strip-Show in the Sunset Hills neighborhood to illustrate how to restore vintage brass fixtures such as doorknobs and hinge hardware!

EXPLORE

In addition to our restoration projects, we did a lot of exploring! With our good friend Adeline Talbot of Studio Traveler, and tour partners at the Weatherspoon Art Museum, we celebrated our 50th anniversary with a trip to Havana, Cuba in February! Participants walked the narrow streets of Old Havana, visited innovative art galleries and workshops, and spent a day in rural Viñales.

In April we were hosted by County Commissioner Kay Cashion, who serves as the Chairperson for the North Carolina State Capitol Foundation in Raleigh. We enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the Capitol and the Executive Mansion. Participants took lunch under the dome, and explored the architecture of the general assembly chambers before taking in the highlights of the Executive Mansion.

In September we were hosted in Caswell County by Sally and Bob Cone, who opened their extraordinary Neal-Worsham-White House, c. 1856 to our intrepid group, along with the c. 1782 Brown’s Store. In addition, we saw a home designed by African American master craftsman Thomas Day, the nineteenth century home and office of politician Calvin Graves, Clarendon Hall, and the 1858 Caswell County Courthouse.

Perhaps best of all, we lead tours to explore our own home town. Ryan Gray and Matt Hintz led tours across center city to look at landmark buildings and modernism, and we have explored historic neighborhoods.

Keep Connected to Preservation Greensboro on the web. Follow our feed on Facebook and receive monthly updates through our LandmarksOnline newsletters by email. Questions? Contact Judi at (336) 272-5003 or jkastner@preservationgreensboro.org.
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such as Southside, Summit Avenue, Fisher Park, Westerwood, College Hill, Sunset Hills, and Lindley Park. We even had the special opportunity to explore the abandoned industrial Printworks complex with its vibrant collection of graffiti, thanks to Jim Peeples.

Additionally, we have enjoyed partnerships with organizations such as the Sternberger Artists Center and their Venetian-inspired town house on Summit Avenue! Also known as the Sigmund Sternberger House at 712 Summit Avenue, it is the finest Italian Renaissance Revival style residence in Greensboro. It was built in 1926 by Harry Barton, one of the city’s most prominent early twentieth-century architects.

CONNECT

In addition to restoration and exploration, history and historic preservation are great ways to connect people together. In August, scholar and historian Renee Donnell presented her findings on the African American experience at Blandwood, including connections with the history of enslaved people at Blandwood and their genealogy.

In September we partnered with Eagle Scout candidate William Collis, who constructed a fence that screens the HVAC unit from view, and our Blandwood Garden volunteer team did a tremendous job working to transplant and reorganize our historic rosarium with its antebellum rose varieties. In spring and late summer, they provide eye-catching color and fragrance, from the pink Champney’s Cluster (1811) to the apricot blend of Safrano (1839).

We connected with visitors from across the country, including the national organization The Decorative Arts Trust who were guided by Judith Cushman Hammer through Blandwood’s furnishings and interiors. We connected with the national organization The Vernacular Architecture Forum to examine early Guilford County architecture including Old Brick Church,
historic Jamestown, and the Palmer Institute in Sedalia. We connected with Preservation North Carolina who brought hundreds to our city during their annual meeting to celebrate our most treasured places such as old Temple Emanuel, Bennett College, The International Civil Rights Center and Museum, Elsewhere, the Summit Avenue neighborhood, and Revolution Mill.

Elizabeth Zook and Sarah and Matt Thomas hosted a Young Professionals event at the rehabbed old church that is now the offices for the Edge Water Group. We also spent an evening with special guest Ron Staley of Christman Corporation at the home of Eva and Mike Cooke, the Lunsford Richardson estate Hillsdale Farms, North Carolina’s only example of the work of renowned architect Brognard Okie.

On behalf of the Preservation Greensboro Incorporated board, staff, and all of our volunteers, thank you for being a part of a fantastic fiftieth year for historic preservation in Guilford County!

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