Mary Werner DeNadai to Receive James Biddle Award For Lifetime Achievement in Preservation

Mary Werner DeNadai, FAIA, has made an exceptional contribution to the field of historic preservation for the past 30 years both as an architect and in leadership positions of important national and local preservation organizations. During the course of her career as an architect, Mary has been principal-in-charge for the restoration of historic properties as diverse as the South Wing of the Pennsylvania State Capitol, the 1924 Majestic Theater in Gettysburg, the Quadrangle Dormitories of the University of Pennsylvania and the Gettysburg Lincoln Railroad Station.

As impressive as her architectural accomplishments have been, Mary DeNadai’s even more important contribution to the preservation field has been her service to national, state and local preservation organizations. She has been an outstanding contributor to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, serving as a member of its Board of Trustees, one of its advisor for Pennsylvania and as a member of the board of Cliveden, a National Trust property in Philadelphia. She is also a board member and past chair of Preservation Action, the national grassroots lobby for historic preservation.

Mary has also lent her leadership and organizational skills to Pennsylvania organizations. She is a board member of Preservation Pennsylvania and a past president, and past chair of the state’s Historic Preservation Board. She has been a board member of both the Pennsylvania and Philadelphia chapters of the American Institute of Architects.

This exceptional commitment to historic preservation—both as an architect and as an organizational leader—earned Mary DeNadai the 1999 F. Otto Haas Award, Pennsylvania's highest recognition for contributions by an individual in the field of historic Preservation.

AIA Philadelphia Landmark Building Award Honors Board of Education Building

The Landmark Building Award was created by AIA Philadelphia to call attention to a noteworthy architect, to install a plaque bearing his or her name on a significant project, or to bestow an award on a distinguished structure. According to the originator of the program, John F. Larkin, EAIA, the Landmark Building Award is intended to recognize the quality and quantity of important historic structures in Philadelphia and the role of architects in shaping our built environment.

The 2007 Landmark Building Award is being presented to the Board of Education Building, a notable example of the Art Deco-era designed by architect Irwin T. Catherine (1884-1944). Completed in 1932, the Board of Education Building was one of the many civic buildings constructed as part of the creation of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. In addition to being a notable work of architecture it is also a testimonial to the planning that revitalized this area in the early part of the twentieth century. One of the most significant aspects of the building is its interiors. As indicated in the National Register nomination, the Board of Education building, a former school, was distinguished by the use of Art Deco and eclectic styles.

The Board Room foyer and public and ceremonial areas are fine examples of Art Deco and eclectic styles. The main corridors on each floor, as well as the auditorium, feature lighting, grilles, and signage executed in the Art Deco style. The Board Room foyer is Neo-Greek in the Ionic style; the Board Room, the Secretary’s office, and the Superintendent’s office are Neo-Colonial; the President’s office is done in the Georgian style, and the 10th floor cafeteria is described as being of the Spanish provincial style.”

Architect Irwin T. Catherine was the son of Joseph W. Catharine, chair of the Philadelphia Board of Public Education and, no doubt, the encourager of his son’s career. Catharine received his Certificate in Architecture from Drexel Institute in 1903. Almost immediately he found employment as an assistant draftsman with the Philadelphia Board of Public Education. By 1923, he had become architect for the Board and in 1931 was made Superintendent of Building, a position he retained until his retirement in 1937. Although Catharine is cited for designing several of the Modern style schools in Philadelphia, he is chiefly associated with the Administration Building. Catharine joined the AIA in 1921 and served as the vice-president of the Pennsylvania Society of Architects in 1929.

The Board of Education building, relatively un-altered since its construction, has been sold by the School District of Philadelphia to a private developer, who is converting it to a residential use. The main historic interiors will be preserved, including the Board Room and first floor offices and the Art Deco auditorium, as well as the marble-lined corridors on most floors.
UOenburgs decision to move its corporate headquarters to the Navy Yard and to rehabilitate five historic properties there demonstrates an exceptional corporate commitment to historic preservation. Founded in 1970, UOenburgs operates three retail lines—Urban Outfitters, Anthropologie and Free People—with close to 200 stores in the United States, Canada and Europe. Even prior to its move to the Navy Yard, UOenburgs had already demonstrated an interest in historic properties. Its Free People division headquarters was located in an historic property at 17th and Locust streets in Philadelphia; its Philadelphia Anthropologie store is in the former Fell-van Rensselaer Mansion on Rittenhouse Square. However, by relocating its corporate headquarters and 650 employees to the Navy Yard UOenburgs dramatically advanced the preservation of the historic core of the Navy Yard. UOenburgs' campus has brought vibrant new energy to the Navy Yard as a whole. The UOenburgs campus includes a wide range of functions including, in addition to office space, an inspiration library, gym, interior gardens and two restaurants. As noted in the Grand Jury Project Awards, renovation of the historic buildings was carried out with remarkable sensitivity to their historic character while also incorporating UOenburgs' corporate style. As Inquirer critic Inga Saffron noted, “Rarely has an architecture and landscape design so thoroughly embodied a company’s corporate identity.” UOenburgs and particularly its chairman and CEO Richard A. Hayne are to be commended for their exceptional contribution to historic preservation in Philadelphia.

Rhoda Richards was one of the founders of the Preservation Coalition—formed by volunteers concerned with historic preservation—one of the predecessor organizations of the Preservation Alliance. It is, therefore, fitting that this year’s Richards Award goes to the Alliance’s most dedicated current volunteer, Patricia Patterson.

For over five years Patricia Patterson has come to the Preservation Alliance’s office two or three days every week to help with the administrative tasks of the Alliance. She has brought her excellent organizational skills to managing and maintaining our database of members and contributors, as well as helping with easement files and other matters. Pat has been an indispensable member of the Alliance’s staff.

Pat’s interest in historic preservation is an outgrowth of her career as an architect. For over 20 years she had her own architectural practice and for ten of those years she also operated as a general contractor, renovating houses mainly in Center City where she has lived for over 35 years. Since retiring from architectural practice Pat has taken up making prints, drawings and paintings and has recently exhibited her work in an Old City gallery.

Pat is the volunteer every non-profit organization seeks: dedicated, knowledgeable, consistent, and committed to the Alliance’s mission.
The Henry J. Magaziner Award recognizes an individual or organization outside the normal circle of preservation and design that has made a significant contribution to the preservation of the built environment. This year the Historic Preservation Committee of AIA Philadelphia has selected the Capitol Preservation Committee as recipient of the award.

The Capitol Preservation Committee was created by the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1982 to oversee restoration and to preserve the historic integrity of the Capitol Building along with its historic contents. It was created in 1956 by Morris Milgrim, a pioneer in the development of racially integrated communities. This was Milgrim’s first venture and was the first integrated suburban development in the city and one of the first in the nation. Noted architect Louis I. Kahn served as a consultant for the design of the 18 single-family houses, which are excellent examples of the organic vein of mid-20th century Modern architecture. Original residents included Milgrim himself; U.S. Representative Robert N. C. Nix and the Reverend Leon Sullivan.

The present and past residents of Greenbelt Knoll deserve our appreciation for preserving this important housing development and securing its designation as an historic district.
The Union League of Philadelphia was founded at the onset of the Civil War to raise troops and funds for the Union effort. The building was completed in 1865 according to the plans of architect John Fraser, and represents one of the finest examples of the Second Empire style in this country. An annex facing 15th Street, designed by Horace Trumbauer in the Renaissance Revival style was added in 1910. The comprehensive restoration work included the complete reconstruction of the missing tower cupola and roof cresting; repair, restoration and painting of architectural millwork and windows; complete repair and cleaning of all masonry materials including the reconstruction of the front entrance stairs using cast stone and Nova Scotia brownstone; disassembly and reconstruction of the 15th Street stairs; conservation of stained glass windows; and restoration of all lighting and metals. The multi-year exterior restoration was an important effort that, through state-of-the-art historic preservation practices, preserved the architectural offerings of two significant Philadelphia architects - Fraser and Trumbauer – as well as the political and social histories that are represented by their early- and late-Victorian designs.

Originally designed by Frederick Graff in 1829 as a Romantic landscape, by the 1990s the South Garden, adjacent to the Water Works, suffered from vandalism and lack of maintenance. The Fairmount Park Commission and the Fund for the Water Works commissioned a comprehensive Historic Landscape Report, which, in part, determined the "target" date for the restoration should be 1875, by which time all the essential historical elements were in place. While the setting for the restoration is a designed landscape, the restoration’s main focus was on the architectural and built features. The Marble Fountain – which hadn’t operated for more than 115 years – was dismantled and reconstructed after underground water service was reinstated. The 1848 Gothic-inspired Graff Memorial underwent extensive stone and metal restoration and conservation, and the return of the bust of Frederick Graff. The elaborate cast-iron railings – largely missing by the 1990s – along the Cliffside Path which connects to the Art Museum were recreated, and the path itself was stabilized and paved. Other historic site features were also reintroduced including reproduction light fixtures, benches, and ornamental railings. Now thousands of visitors can once again experience the South Garden as originally conceived.

Originally built in 1871 on Girard Avenue just outside Philadelphia’s Northern Liberties neighborhood, this monumental Italianate/Second-Empire-styled neighborhood landmark operated as the Eight National Bank until the building was sold in 1944. Eventually it became essentially abandoned, suffering from years of unsympathetic alterations, structural and environmental issues, and damage from leaky roofs, no heat, broken windows. The building has now been restored and served as a community-focused bank that has become, once again, a grand building of a thriving neighborhood in the midst of its own renaissance.

The original masonry openings were restored on the ground floor by replicating the pilasters with salvaged masonry and new granite sills. Metal brackets, copper trim and soffits of the Mansard roof were replicated, and the roof itself was replaced with simulated slate shingles. The large-scale mahogany doors were also replicated, as were many window frames and sashes. This former eyesore has become, once again, a grand building serving as a community-focused bank that will play an important role in the continuing economic resurgence of its neighborhood.
The Second Bank of the U.S. was designed in 1818 by William Strickland and completed in 1824. It is one of the earliest examples of Greek-Revival architecture in the nation, noted for its monumental north and south porticoes, each consisting of eight massive Doric columns of Pennsylvania marble. It is now part of Independence National Historical Park.

The treatments designed for this project signify a new era in addressing the deterioration associated with Pennsylvania Blue Marble. Partially spalled - but still sound - marble was reattached using titanium and stainless-steel orthopedic bone screws. The more deteriorated stone was treated with ceramic rods set with adhesive. Altogether more than 900 pins and screws were inserted throughout 375 identified spalls, along with specially formulated grout used to fill voids. It is expected that these innovative treatments will find application to other types of stones exhibiting similar deterioration.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art has expanded its presence on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway with the acquisition of the former Fidelity Mutual Life Insurance Co. building, renamed the Ruth and Raymond G. Perelman Building. The 1927 office building, designed by Zantzinger, Borie and Medary, is a masterpiece of Art Deco style.

The Ruth and Raymond G. Perelman Building - Adaptive Re-Use and Exterior Restoration Pennsylvania and Fairmount Avenues, Philadelphia

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The Second Bank of the U.S. - Conservation Treatment of the Portico Columns 420 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia

Due to atmospheric pollution, poor maintenance, building design, and inherent inadequacies of the original marble, these columns had become seriously decayed and eroded. Instead of aggressive restoration intervention, the National Park Service decided instead to stabilize and preserve the marble columns according to the recommendations of the Architectural Conservation Laboratory of the Graduate Program of Historic Preservation at the University of Pennsylvania.

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Lemon Hill Gazebo - Restoration East Fairmount Park, Philadelphia

The Lemon Hill Gazebo, located just above Boathouse Row, this cast-iron Victorian structure was built in the third quarter of the 1880s and quickly became a popular observation and resting place for the public. Sitting on an outcrop atop Lemon Hill, the Gazebo is still a favored place to watch regattas on the Schuylkill River below.

Over the years, the Gazebo suffered a cycle of vandalism, neglect, and overzealous painting. Invasive trees blocked its breathtaking view, and overgrown vegetation deterred park visitors.

The Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust, Inc. initiated a conservation plan and raised funds - notably from the Junior League and the Rotary Club - for the restoration project. A rigorous analysis of the original paint scheme by the Trust conservators determined the original colors of pale brown and purple. A pneumatic tool known as a needle scaler was used to remove the many layers of old paint without damaging the original materials. Rotted and missing wooden elements were repaired or replaced. The new paint is graffiti resistant.

New security lighting was installed. Finally, volunteers cleaned the site and planted new annuals. The Fairmount Park Commission is now committed to regular maintenance of the restored historic Gazebo.

HONORING

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In 2004, Urban Outfitters, Inc., an apparel and housewares retailer, made the pioneering decision to move their scattered corporate headquarters and 650 employees from Center City to the Philadelphia Navy Yard. For the past two years, Urban Outfitters worked with the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation and a team of architects, engineers, and historic preservation consultants to rehabilitate five historic buildings: Buildings 7, 10, 12, 15, and 543, all of which are in the Shipyard National Register Historic District. These buildings, which range in date from 1880 to 1939, were originally used for metal-smithing, plate bending, and equipment building. Their architectural styles include Renaissance Revival and Art Moderne.

Urban Outfitters invested approximately $100 million in the 240,000-square-foot project, as well as complying with the preservation standards to obtain federal investment tax credits. The buildings are now used as office spaces, and also include a cafeteria, conference and training rooms, a fitness center, an indoor garden, and even a koi pond created from original metal-bending pits.

In order to keep the industrial character of the buildings, most of the volume and openness of the industrial spaces was retained by use of new transparent walls and by leaving the original steel structure, concrete floors and brick walls exposed. Even the huge overhead cranes were retained. Throughout, original materials – such as ornamental and roofing terra-cotta, granite, wood, and metal – were preserved, cleaned and repaired.

Restoration and adaptive re-use of the Blue Ball Barn was part of an extensive regional redevelopment plan to preserve open space and commemorate the agricul-tural history of the Brandywine Valley. The barn complex was constructed in 1914 to serve as the dairy farm for Nemours, the estate of Alfred I. du Pont, and it originally exhibited innovations in sanitation and fire protection.

The barn complex had deteriorated to an advanced state of decay, however, and required extensive reconstruction. Historical research and field analysis identified significant design features that were restored to their original appearance, while the interior was renovated to create open, accessible exhibit space for folk-art and historical collections, and public event space for the new Alapocas Run State Park. A two-story addition was constructed adjacent to the barn on the footprint of the original livestock sheds to house modern programmatic functions. And the former barnyard has been paved to be the focal point for public gatherings.

In addition to rigorous restoration and sensitive adaptive re-use, the project is one of the first in the historic preservation projects in nation to successfully meet the requirements of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver Rating standards. The design team worked to insure the renovation to the barn was undertaken utilizing energy-efficient, renewable, and environmental-friendly building materials and systems, while preserving the historic integrity of the original structure.
Information about sponsorship and tickets to the luncheon is available on the Preservation Alliance website at www.preservationalliance.com