

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT: MARION (“MICK”) HERSEY

The first award for outstanding achievement in historic preservation is made in the Special Achievement category. Awards given in this category recognize individuals, organizations, programs, or special efforts that do not quite fit into the other award categories but have made a significant impact toward the preservation of cultural or historic properties. This year, the recipient in this category is Marion (better known as “Mick”) Hersey (HER SEE) from Bremerton. Mick is recognized in special achievement for his countless volunteer hours devoted to preserving and restoring historical markers, military markers, cemeteries, grave stones, and historic military artifacts located not only in Kitsap but in counties up and down the I-5 corridor and Olympic Peninsula. This is a timely honor in view of the Memorial holiday we observed yesterday as well as 2017 marks the centennial observance of the United States’ entry into the World War I conflict.

Mick got started in his mission to preserve historic markers in 2010 after noticing neglected memorials along the boardwalk in downtown Bremerton. On his own volition, he repainted over 300 of these plaques at no cost to the public.

Himself retired from the Navy, Mick is motivated by his patriotism and love of history. He believes that the restoration work he does brings honor and dignity to the persons, actions, and events in history that the memorials were created to commemorate.

Aside from dedication to his work, Mick is a take-charge kind of guy who is always looking for a worthy project to take on. But, he is NOT the type who charges into a project without doing his homework first; for Mick, doing top quality work is the *only* way to get a job done and does his due diligence to learn and understand best practices before starting work on a marker. He also makes sure that he has the owner’s permission to perform his restoration work at each and every site, whether public or privately owned. To help on his projects, Mick enlists his own family members, many friends, active-duty military personnel, historical and veterans groups, and all levels of government entities. His many accomplishments include the restoration of over 400 grave stones, memorials, and historical markers in addition to 100 bronze markers. Mick has cleared many overgrown cemeteries, restored 4 gun placements, 5 anchors, and 12 flagpoles.

Amongst his most ambitious project was repainting a F-8 Crusader fighter jet at Bremerton's NAD Soroptimist Park.

What we have described here barely scratches the surface of all that Mick has accomplished to preserve these symbols of our heritage and the sacrifices of others. But as the Daughters of the American Revolution wrote to us in their nomination of Mick, "He gives totally of himself for his love of preservation." Mick, at this time, it is truly an honor to present you with this award.

MEDIA CATEGORY: LOPEZ ISLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR WA STATE INSIDER APP

The next award is given in the Media Category. Awards made in this category honor outstanding efforts in which cultural and historic resources are portrayed in the media in an innovative, accurate, and appropriate manner. This year, the award in the Media category goes to the five Northwest History class students of teacher Anthony Rovente (ROW VENT A) at Lopez Middle School, and Tim Fry of 468 Communications in Bellingham. The award honors these students who researched and documented the people, places, and events they viewed as the most interesting and personally meaningful in Washington State History.

If someone were to say “History is boring” to any one of the five students receiving an award here today, they might get some serious pushback. More likely they would say “Go to my app Washington State Insider and learn otherwise.”

Lopez Middle Schoolers Anna, Ava, Mallory, Shayna, and Sonnette (SO NET) have spent a school year learning about Washington State history to create the content for the app that came to be named Washington State Insider.

For Rovente, a history teacher and local b & b innkeeper originally from upstate New York, the project linked two professional goals: finding a way to show students that History is current and relevant to their lives while building skills that will benefit them in the future. Rovente said: “I loved the idea because it would help us teach the skill students need to succeed in the Information Age. The Washington State Insider app made the subject matter more meaningful to them. That’s something every teacher strives for.” For Tim, the marketing app developer, the key was to get the students to write about history for a world that’s become accustomed to 140 character sound bites; during the class, he was constantly reminding the students about the need for the content to grab people’s attention.

For the final assignment, the students were to take a turn in front of the classroom to present their longer-form blog posts featuring the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation’s 2016 list of Most Endangered Historic Properties. For their presentations, Shayna wrote about Providence Heights College in Issaquah, Sonnette on the folk architecture Stone Houses in Whitman County, Ava selected

the abandoned Enloe Dam Powerhouse near Oroville in Okanogan County, Mallory selected the Dvorak Barn in Kent, and Anna wrote on the long vacant Woodinville School.

The students' reaction to the project? Shayna said: "I liked not only being able to learn about, but also being able to pick the places we'd study—instead of being handed a book to read and then tested on it." Sonnette said "You can learn about new places that are cool that you never knew about." And from Anna: "Our class is making history by creating our own history app."

For both Rovente and Tim Fry, they see the work by the Lopez Island students as the first in other mobile apps that teaches about history and historic places. Rovente said "The students hope their hard work will help others better appreciate the unique history of our state. I really hope the Washington State Insider app inspires other educators to follow the ProjectWA model."

At this time, I ask Lopez Island Middle School students Anna, Ava, Mallory, Shayna, and Sonnette, Instructor Anthony Rovente, and Tim Fry to step forward to receive your award.

STEWARDSHIP CATEGORY: HISTORIC SEATTLE FOR WASHINGTON HALL

The next award category to celebrate is “Stewardship.” Award recipients in the Stewardship category recognize persons and organizations that have made a long and distinguished commitment to preserve a historic place. In 2017, it is a pleasure and honor to recognize our hosts for our ceremony today: Historic Seattle and their partners for stewardship of Washington Hall.

A decade ago, Washington Hall, seemed destined for demolition. Deferred maintenance and capital needs rendered the building structurally unsound and a leaking roof contributed to mold and decay. The survival of Washington Hall is a testament to community advocacy, partnerships, and a philosophy of stewardship that honors the extraordinary cultural legacy embodied in this building.

Washington Hall has always been a home to diverse communities and audiences. Designed by Seattle architect Victor Voorhees and built by Hans Pederson for the Danish Brotherhood in 1908, Washington Hall includes two large public spaces which were available for broad community use from the beginning. Through the years, Washington Hall hosted, among many others, Sephardic theater performances, Japanese Buddhist ceremonies, and Filipino community dances. The Hall was particularly important in the African American community and was popular as a venue for local and touring musicians, including Oscar Holden, Duke Ellington, Billie Holliday, and Mahalia Jackson. It was also a hotbed of political organizing, from a speech given by Marcus Garvey to meetings of the Black Panthers.

In 1973, Washington Hall was purchased by the Sons of Haiti, an African-American masonic organization. Over the years, as their membership dwindled, the Sons of Haiti found it increasingly difficult to keep up with growing maintenance and building preservation needs. In 2007, the Sons of Haiti decided to sell the building.

With development pressure intensifying in the surrounding neighborhood, it seemed likely that Washington Hall would be demolished. But historic preservation advocates, cultural leaders, and community members were determined not to lose this gathering place of long standing importance. Historic Seattle and 4Culture (King County’s agency in support of arts and heritage),

sprang into action by committing \$250,000 towards acquisition costs, knowing that millions more would be required to fully rehabilitate the building. 4Culture also prepared a local landmark nomination for Washington Hall, and as a result, the building was designated a City of Seattle Landmark in January 2009. Listing on the Washington State Heritage Register and National Register of Historic Places followed in 2010.

With historic designation status secured, Historic Seattle finalized its purchase of Washington Hall in June 2009. The first phase of rehabilitation work focused on urgent structural, roof, and boiler repairs; critical life-safety improvements; and improvements that would allow the main public spaces to be rented for events and performances. When this work was complete, Historic Seattle reintroduced and managed a rental program for events and performances, generating income to support operating costs.

While the first phase of rehabilitation was underway, Historic Seattle again joined forces with 4Culture to recruit and select anchor partners – organizations that would be long-term tenants of the building, as well as collaborators in community engagement, fundraising, and planning for the building’s full rehabilitation and long-term operations. The anchor partner selection process focused on arts and culture organizations with existing ties to the Central District. In addition to Historic Seattle, the anchor partners are 206 Zulu, Hidmo, and Voices Rising. Just as Washington Hall has historically welcomed those who were excluded from other venues, the anchor partners selected for Washington Hall would work to amplify the voices of marginalized people and communities. Together, Historic Seattle and Washington Hall’s anchor partners developed a vision for the future of the building. The full rehabilitation of Washington Hall was completed over several additional phases, from 2012-2016 for a total cost of \$9.9 million.

4Culture nominated *Historic Seattle, 206 Zulu, Hidmo, and Voices Rising* for a Stewardship award to acknowledge the persistent, phased approach taken to the rehabilitation of Washington Hall. With that, it now gives me great pleasure to recognize Historic Seattle for leading efforts to preserve Washington Hall.

VALERIE SIVINSKI AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REHABILITATION— PUBLIX HOTEL

The last award to be presented today is the Valerie Sivinski Award for Outstanding Rehabilitation. This category recognizes preservation projects that result in the successful rehabilitation of historic buildings or structures that meet, and even exceed, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. The award is named in honor of the late Valerie Sivinski, a Tacoma historical architect, preservation advocate, and a good friend. This year, the Sivinski Award recognizes the rehabilitation of the Publix Hotel building, located in the International District not far from here.

The Publix Hotel was built in 1927 to house transient immigrant workers in order to meet the surging workforce needs of a rapidly growing Seattle. Single-room occupancy hotels, often referred to as “SROs,” were in high demand in the 1920s and 1930s. At one time the International District had more than 65 SROs catering to waves of migrant workers from China, Japan and the Philippines. Only one third of those SROs have survived to the present. The location of the Publix, directly across the street from Union Station, attracted large numbers of train passengers coming into Seattle and for decades stood as a gateway to the neighborhood and a new life in the city. The hotel was also a significant social gathering place for short term and long term guests alike.

In 1974, the Moriguchi family, owners of the International Districts famous Uwajimaya store, purchased the Publix Hotel and surrounding land. The Asian grocery store and wholesaler hung up its first shingle in 1928 – just after the Publix was completed – by selling fishcakes and other goods to Japanese workers. During World War II, Moriguchi family members were forced into internment at Tule Lake, California. However, Uwajimaya was able to re-open in 1946 following the war; Business has flourished ever since, employing over 400 people today.

After the Publix Hotel closed in 2003, it sat vacant for over 10 years. Following the two year \$24 million rehabilitation and new addition, the building is now home to 125 new apartment units and 12,000 square feet of ground floor retail space. Spectrum Development Solutions served as the project manager. Other team members included Clark Design Group, Graham Baba Architects, and Marpac construction.

The Publix has a long history as an affordable living option. In 1937, workers could rent a room for as low as \$2 a week, which inflated to a bargain rate of \$75 a week in the early 2000s. Today, a set number of units are offered at about two-thirds of the market rate, which enabled the project to receive mortgage financing from HUD and incentives under the City of Seattle's multifamily tax-exemption program. To help the project pencil out, Federal historic tax credits and the Special Valuation for Historic Properties incentive were also obtained.

During construction, hazardous materials were abated, seismic reinforcement was added and the exterior stucco was cleaned and repainted. Other work included restoration of the entry canopy, the hotel lobby and retail storefronts. New but historically-appropriate wood windows were installed and new utility systems were added. Not only did the Publix Hotel rehabilitation exceed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, it also helped pioneer the use of a new seismic retrofit technique that used a reinforced carbon fiber wrap that was skillfully applied to strengthen the building's concrete and hollow clay tile walls. This technique minimized the requirement for braced frames or other steel superstructure, with the added benefit that the work was easily concealed in order to preserve a clean interior look.

To keep it relevant for today's workforce, the building now includes plenty of modern amenities found in new apartment buildings, such as a rooftop terrace and BBQs, an area for pets, and bicycle storage.

The Uwajimaya Company and the Moriguchi Family have been longtime community-minded stewards of the International District. Today as we celebrate the completion of the Publix Hotel rehabilitation, we also celebrate the legacy that Uwajimaya and the Moriguchis have provided to the neighborhood, Seattle, and the State of Washington.