

# News Release



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*National Trust for Historic Preservation Presents Trustees Award for Organizational Excellence to the Garden Conservancy in Cold Spring, N.Y. Flowery Praise for Nation's First Group Dedicated to Preserving Gardens*

**Nashville, Tenn. (October 15, 2009)**—Today, the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** presented its **Trustees Award for Organizational Excellence** to the **Garden Conservancy in Cold Spring, N.Y.** The group was one of 23 award winners honored by the National Trust during its **2009 National Preservation Conference** in Nashville, Tenn. The special award goes to a nonprofit organization that has demonstrated extraordinary achievement over a long period of time.

Founded just two decades ago as the nation's first nonprofit group dedicated to the preservation of exceptional gardens, the Garden Conservancy has already had a tremendous impact on the way Americans appreciate and preserve historic landscapes. The organization has invested nearly \$9 million in the preservation of more than 90 important gardens and currently manages 16 major preservation projects across the nation. Three of the gardens under the Conservancy's care, including the sunken gardens and rose garden of Steepletop, the New York home of famed American poet Edna St. Vincent Millay, are National Historic Landmarks and nine are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Every year since 1995, the Conservancy's famed Open Days provide a rare opportunity to experience hundreds of gardens not usually available for public viewing. In addition, the Conservancy's lectures and symposia present new concepts and best practices in garden design, development and preservation, while volunteer opportunities and internships offer participants a chance to gain first-hand experience.

A focus of the Conservancy's efforts is working, sometimes over a period of many years, to develop master plans, establish sound financial practices and create interpretation programs to enable significant gardens to make the challenging transition from private ownership to public access. In addition, intensive preservation projects have saved and restored treasures as diverse as Longue Vue, a New Orleans garden devastated by Hurricane Katrina; the Japanese-style Humes Garden in New York State; and the long-lost gardens of Alcatraz Island in San Francisco.

"The Garden Conservancy is one of the first organizations in the country to recognize that important gardens are an essential part of our irreplaceable heritage – as much a part of the historic preservation landscape as buildings, birth sites and battlefields," said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "Equally important, this dedicated organization has encouraged us all to discover, enjoy and be inspired by some the nation's most beautiful places."

The National Preservation Awards are bestowed on distinguished individuals, nonprofit organizations, public agencies and corporations whose skill and determination have given new meaning to their communities through preservation of our architectural and cultural heritage. These efforts include citizen attempts to save and maintain important landmarks; companies and craftsmen whose work restores the richness of the past; the vision of public

officials who support preservation projects and legislation in their communities; and educators and journalists who help Americans understand the value of preservation. The winners of the National Preservation Awards will appear in the November/December issue of *Preservation Magazine* and online at [www.PreservationNation.org/awards](http://www.PreservationNation.org/awards).

**To download high resolution images of this year's National Preservation Award winners, visit [www.PreservationNation.org/press](http://www.PreservationNation.org/press)**

#### **THE 2009 NATIONAL PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS:**

**Louise du Pont Crowninshield Award: Vincent J. Scully, *New Haven, Conn.***—Often called the most important interpreter of art and architecture of our time, Vincent Scully merits the national preservation movement's highest accolade for 61 years of inspiring generations of students and for his tireless commitment to historic preservation and architecture.

**John H. Chafee Trustees Award for Outstanding Achievement in Public Policy: Laura W. Bush and John Nau, III, *Houston, Tex.***—Former First Lady Mrs. Laura W. Bush and John Nau, chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, spearheaded Preserve America, one of the most far-reaching preservation initiatives ever launched.

**Peter H. Brink Award for Individual Achievement in Historic Preservation: Sandra Stokes, *Baton Rouge, La.***—Sandra Stokes has been an inspiring leader in the ongoing effort to protect Louisiana's cultural and architectural heritage. Since 2006, her laser-like focus has been directed on New Orleans' Charity Hospital, an Art Deco icon and neighborhood anchor closed since Hurricane Katrina and threatened with demolition.

**Trustees' Emeritus Award for Excellence in the Stewardship of Historic Sites: Historic Rugby, *Rugby, Tenn.***—Founded in 1880, Rugby, Tenn. was envisioned as a class-free, agrarian community. Today, the Victorian village is flourishing thanks to the nonprofit group, Historic Rugby.

**Trustees' Award for Organizational Excellence: Garden Conservancy, *Cold Spring, N.Y.***—The nation's first nonprofit group dedicated to preserving exceptional gardens, the Garden Conservancy has had a tremendous impact on the way Americans appreciate and preserve historic landscapes.

**National Trust/HUD Secretary's Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation: Fairbanks Flats, *Beloit, Wisc.***—Fairbanks Flats was constructed in 1917 as company housing for African-American machinists. After years of deterioration, the complex was painstakingly rehabilitated and today is once again a community anchor.

**National Trust/Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Award for Federal Partnerships in Historic Preservation: Federal Transit Administration, Lower Manhattan Recovery Office, *New York, N.Y.***—In 2006, the Vesey Street Staircase was named one of *America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places*. Today—just three years later—the National Trust honored the Federal Transit Administration for its role in saving both the staircase and other evocative links with 9/11.

**National Trust Board of Advisors' Award: Gates of Ballston, *Arlington, Va.***—After decades of heavy use, this 464-unit Colonial Revival-style housing complex was in decay. Arlington County joined forces with a nonprofit developer to give The Gates a long-overdue makeover and help meet the community's need for affordable housing.

#### **THE 2009 NATIONAL PRESERVATION HONOR AWARD WINNERS:**

**Bedford Springs Resort, *Bedford, Pa.***—In the Allegheny mountains of south central Pa., this famed resort that once served as the summer White House of President James Buchanan sparkles again after a meticulous \$120 million renovation.

**Meier & Frank Department Store Building, *Portland, Ore.***—The Meier & Frank department store was a beloved community landmark for nearly a century before it fell into disrepair. The Portland Development Commission led a visionary effort to turn the once faded terra cotta palace into a luxury hotel and department store.

**Charleston Preservation Plan, Charleston, S.C.**—After decades of zealously preserving the Holy City’s treasure trove of architectural wonders, the Historic Charleston Foundation has partnered with the City to adopt a groundbreaking plan that provides Charleston with a strong preservation-based roadmap for its future.

**Plaza Theatre, El Paso, Tex.**—When it opened in 1930, the Spanish Colonial Revival-style Plaza Theatre was a showstopper. After years of decline and the threat of demolition, the Plaza has been meticulously renovated thanks to an innovative partnership between the El Paso Community Foundation and the City.

**Please Touch Museum at Memorial Hall, Philadelphia, Pa.**—Memorial Hall, one of just two buildings remaining from the Centennial Exposition of 1876, was transformed into a luminous new home for Please Touch Museum, an award-winning learning center for children.

**Southworth Mansion, Cleveland, Ohio**—When prominent businessman William Palmer Southworth constructed his lavish Italianate mansion in 1879, he spared no expense. Nearly 130 years later when Laborers Union Local 860 lovingly returned the building to its original splendor, history repeated itself.

**Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Okla., Mont., Wyo. and Colo.**—In the 1860s, U.S. military troops attacked peaceful encampments of Cheyenne and Arapaho. More than 140 years after the carnage, both battlegrounds are National Historic Sites thanks in large measure to tribe members who would not let their history be forgotten.

**The Danish School, Frederiksted, St. Croix, U.S.V.I.**—The Caribbean island of St. Croix’s rich and culturally diverse history is proudly displayed in the Danish School, built in 1799. Poorly renovated over the years and nearly destroyed by Hurricane Hugo, the building has now been gloriously restored.

**Gutierrez-Hubbell House, Bernalillo County, N.M.**—The 1840s-era Gutierrez-Hubbell House served for 150 years as the home of James and Juliana Gutierrez-Hubbell and their descendants. When it was threatened by inappropriate development, local residents and county officials came together to restore the home for use as a museum.

**John Latschar, Gettysburg, Pa.**—As superintendent of Gettysburg National Military Park, John Latschar leads the ongoing effort to preserve and interpret one of America’s best-known historic sites.

**Book Cadillac Hotel, Detroit, Mich.**—When it opened in 1924, Detroit’s Book Cadillac Hotel was, at 33 stories, the tallest hotel in the world. Closed for more than two decades, the hotel has been lavishly reborn after a 3-year, \$180 million renovation.

**Fox Oakland Theater, Oakland, Calif.**—When the Fox Theater first opened in 1928 was considered one of the finest movie palaces ever built. Closed in 1973 and facing demolition, it has risen from the ashes and is now home to a state-of-the-art performing arts center.

**Fort Piqua Plaza, Piqua, Ohio**—Though it had once welcomed famous guests such as Harry Houdini, Teddy Roosevelt and William Taft, the Fort Piqua Hotel stood vacant for decades—until the City of Piqua created a nonprofit development corporation to transform the faded landmark into a bright new home for the local library.

**Rebuilding Together New Orleans, New Orleans, La.**—In just four years since Hurricane Katrina, the determined band of volunteers and staff members who comprise this nonprofit community group has rebuilt 159 properties and returned 314 senior citizens to their homes.

**Cavallo Point Lodge at Golden Gate, San Francisco, Calif.**—Established in 1866, Fort Baker sits in the Marin Headlands. After the base closed in 2002, Fort Baker became part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and now, following a \$100 million renovation, is home to a stunning new lodge.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation ([www.PreservationNation.org](http://www.PreservationNation.org)) is a non-profit membership organization bringing people together to protect, enhance and enjoy the places that matter to them. By saving the places where great moments from

history – and the important moments of everyday life – took place, the National Trust for Historic Preservation helps revitalize neighborhoods and communities, spark economic development and promote environmental sustainability. With headquarters in Washington, DC, 9 regional and field offices, 29 historic sites, and partner organizations in all 50 states, the National Trust for Historic Preservation provides leadership, education, advocacy and resources to a national network of people, organizations and local communities committed to saving places, connecting us to our history and collectively shaping the future of America’s stories.

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